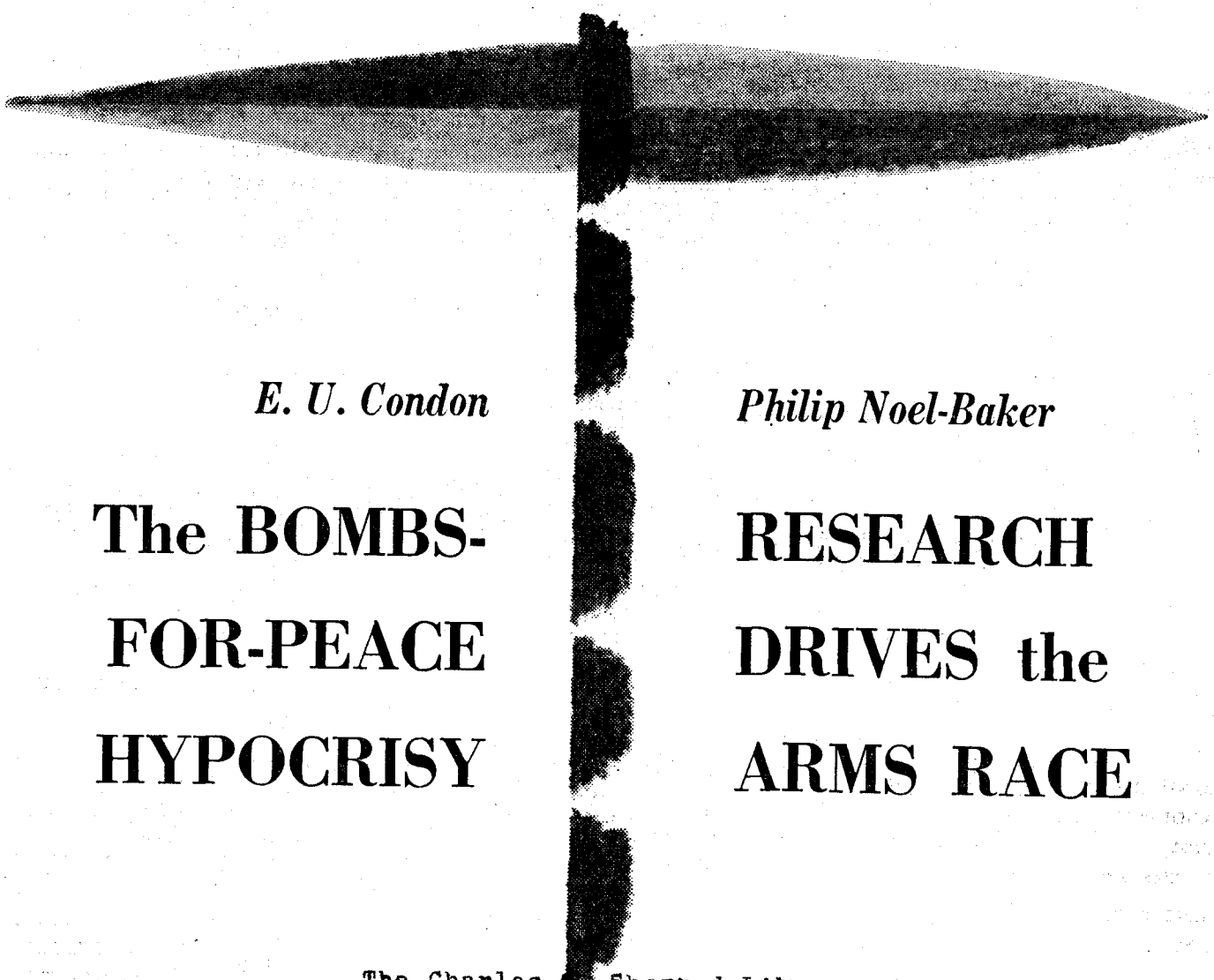
THE
NATION

NOVEMBER 22, 1958 . . 25c

LOST CLASS OF '59

Dan Wakefield



E. U. Condon

The BOMBS-FOR-PEACE HYPOCRISY

Philip Noel-Baker

RESEARCH DRIVES the ARMS RACE

The Charles C. Sherrod Library
EAST TENNESSEE STATE COLLEGE
JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

LICENSED TO [illegible]
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Fall Book Issue

Dear Sirs: Congratulations on your Fall Book issue [November 1]. The pieces by Wolfe, Waldmeir, Stevenson and Mahoney were as literate, meaningful and, in their own way, engaged as anything being written today. This one issue is worth the price of the subscription. But since letters to the editor require a gripe or two, here's mine....

Mark Harris' over-protesting defense of the academic anemic did not convince me.... Isn't it possible that XYZ *and* Harris, one by fleeing outward and one by staying indoors, are both trying to avoid the ugly realities of our time? Since Harris has taken care of XYZ, let me say a word about Harris' dream world.

The university offers a comfortable life where a person who likes words can play little games and show his colleagues how dashing and versatile he is by getting an occasional piece of this stuff published. How sweet. Did it occur to Harris that college is great for the kids, but that intellectuals who have something to say—and here we may exclude the majority of our novelists—should be where things are happening? I'm astonished at how closely the Academia described by Harris resembles the Crystal Palace of industry so well described in these pages ["Life in the Crystal Palace," by Alan Harrington, January 11, 1958]. If this is living, embalm me now.

J. TREIRES

Arlington, Virginia

Dear Sirs: I should like to add a few words to M. L. Rosenthal's outstanding essay on new tendencies in American poetry which appeared in your Fall Book number. What Mr. Rosenthal has to say about the "Olson group" and the other young poets who are off the beaten academic track is valuable and timely. I was distressed, however, that he mentioned by name only one of the outside-New York publishers who have been presenting many of these interesting new poets. Jonathan Williams of Highlands, North Carolina, who launched the "Olson group" in his beautifully printed "Jargon" editions, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti of the City Lights Bookshop in San Francisco, with his effective, low-priced "Pocket Poets Series," have been making, I feel, a distinguished contribution to our cultural scene.

JAMES LAUGHLIN

Norfolk, Conn.

In Praise of the FBI

Dear Sirs: I cannot regard Fred J. Cook's study ["The FBI," October 18] as objective. His approach seems to me partisan and, so far as I am concerned, discredits his conclusions. No doubt Mr. J. Edgar Hoover has gone off the deep end on occasion. Who hasn't? It is nevertheless my conviction that he has deserved well of the American people. If he seeks to influence policy, which is none of his business (as I have no doubt he would agree), let him be rebuked; but let it not be done in the spirit of a tar-and-feather expedition.

My own impression is that the FBI is a first-rate law-enforcement agency. How it compares with Scotland Yard I have no means of knowing; but it is, in my opinion, immeasurably better than the typical American police force.

It is sad but true, unless I am mistaken, that liberals are apt to forget the dependence of civil liberties on effective law enforcement. From what I know, it seems evident that the FBI makes a conscientious effort to respect the Bill of Rights and to conform to the law of the land, even when Mr. Hoover wishes it were otherwise.

JOSEPH O'MEARA
Dean, Notre Dame Law School

Notre Dame, Ind.

Any Resemblance Is Purely Accidental

Dear Sirs: But Miss Merriam's manner of writing ["The Matriarchal Myth," by Eve Merriam, issue of Nov. 8] certainly gives the impression of a would-be matriarch on the rampage. The Osborn drawing seemed a portrait of the author and the little man to be the editor of *The Nation* or even

Yours truly,

ERIC BENTLEY

New York City

Dear Sirs: I wholeheartedly agree with Eve Merriam. In these days of conformity and the bland society, it is a pleasure to read so forthright a statement.

As an instructor in one of the colleges in the New York City area, I can readily agree with her grouping of universities with Madison Avenue and the giant corporations. The very quality that leads individuals to enter teaching careers is methodically squelched by boards of trustees, corporations, and all manner of political St. Georges eager to rescue us from ourselves and from nonexisting menaces.

Until intellectuals begin to question the direction in which we are headed, there is not much hope for remedying our obviously odious situation.

GERALD AUBREY

New York City

In This Issue

EDITORIALS

369 ●

ARTICLES

372 ● Lost Class of '59
by DAN WAKEFIELD

376 ● Bombs-for-Peace Hypocrisy
by E. U. CONDON

378 ● Research Drives the Arms Race
by PHILIP NOEL-BAKER

380 ● All Alone in the Supermarket
by DAVID CORT

383 ● Lure of the Brink
by NORMAN BIRNBAUM

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

386 ● Modern Criticism in America
by IRVING HOWE

387 ● The Change (poem)
by T. WEISS

388 ● The Clown's Report on Satyrs (poem)
by RAMON GUTHRIE

390 ● Nocturnal Aerial Act (poem)
by DONALD SCHENKER

391 ● Law and Policy in the Supreme Court
by C. HERMAN PRITCHETT

391 ● Second Impressions
by ROBERT M. WALLACE

393 ● Letter from Rome
by ALEXANDER WERTH

394 ● Theatre
by ROBERT HATCH

395 ● Music
by LESTER TRIMBLE

Crossword Puzzle (opp. 396)
by FRANK W. LEWIS

George G. Kirstein, Publisher
Carey McWilliams, Editor
Victor H. Bernstein, Managing Editor
Robert Hatch, Books and the Arts

Harold Clurman, Theatre
Maurice Grosser, Art
M. L. Rosenthal, Poetry
Lester Trimble, Music

Alexander Werth, European Correspondent

Mary Simon, Advertising Manager

The Nation, Nov. 22, 1958. Vol. 187, No. 17

The Nation, published weekly (except for omission of four summer issues) by The Nation Company and copyright 1958, in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, N. Y. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

Subscription Prices Domestic—One year $8, Two years $14, Three years $20. Additional postage per year, Foreign and Canadian $1.

Change of Address: Three weeks' notice is required for change of address, which cannot be made without the old address as well as the new.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs, Information Service, Dramatic Index.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1958
VOLUME 187, NUMBER 17

THE NATION

EDITORIALS

Germany in Disequilibrium

As with most opening Soviet diplomatic gambits, Nikita Khrushchev's latest demand — for an end to the Big Four occupation of Berlin — is difficult to assess; the full meaning and thrust of the proposal will not be apparent for some time. But it is not difficult to define the situation from which it stems. Today West Germany and the USSR share (although from opposite viewpoints) a deep concern over the course of events in East Germany. In each case the primary cause for concern is the same, namely, the great trek from East Germany to West Germany. Since 1949, over three million East Germans have found refuge in the Federal Republic and the end is not yet in sight. Indeed, recent months have shown a sharp upsurge in the number of refugees. In a frantic effort to check the exodus, the East Germans have tightened restrictions on all types of travel and communications between the two zones; permits to change domicile to the Federal Republic, for instance, have now been restricted to the sick and the aged. For various reasons, the new restrictions bear most heavily on East German doctors, educators and technicians — precisely those vocational groups most sorely needed and most difficult to replace; these groups have been increasing as a percentage of total refugees.

But in the long run, East Germany's loss of industrial workers may be even more serious. To its consternation, the East German regime has discovered that the excess of live births over deaths is not enough to balance the outflow of refugees. It has also discovered that the working population will have dropped by 250,000 by the end of the third Five Year plan in 1965. "What is truly alarming," one West German paper noted recently, "is not the increase in the flow of refugees from Eastern Germany, but its steady persistence. This is a problem without end, without solution." Noting the vacuum that is being created in East Germany, the Bonn authorities can hardly fail to conclude that if the exodus continues the Russians may be tempted, at some point, to replace refugees with "colonists." The increasing restrictions on travel, moreover, have stepped up popular pressure in West Germany for unification. West Germans fear, and with reason, that they are losing all normal contact with East German friends and relatives.

Several meanings are implicit in this turn of events. For one thing, Khrushchev is leading from weakness, not strength, in his latest demand. The Soviets see and fear the consequences of the continuing mass migration; it is creating a dangerous vacuum as well as discrediting the East German regime. At the same time, the parade of East Germans across the border from the Eastern zone has turned into a dusty triumph for the Bonn regime. A tide of migration has been set in motion that threatens to drain East Germany of manpower to a degree that endangers the stability of the regime. In a power struggle, vacuums can be dangerous. A collapse in East Germany might multiply the dangers implicit in the German situation. And it is in Germany, not in the Far East (where the guns still boom every day) or in the Middle East (where palace revolutions are plotted every other weekend) that the risks of war are greatest. Whether Mr. Khrushchev is serious or not about his latest demand, it should serve to remind the West that the precarious equilibrium which has prevailed in Germany since 1945 is being disturbed by a shift in population for which, in varying degrees, both sides in the cold war are responsible.

Sunbeam

Among the contributions of the military mind to the health, wealth and happiness of mankind is the World War II practice of tagging the most bloody operations with the most pleasant and inspiring names. Following this custom, the code name "Sunbeam" was applied to a recent exercise in which American nuclear bombers were sent over Britain in waves and the British Fighter Command rose to meet them. The British Air Ministry described conditions as "reasonably representative of what might be expected in the initial stages of global nuclear war." Later, "Fighter Command were very

NOV 20 '58

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

satisfied with the way things went" — the percentage of interceptions being high, and a noticeable improvement over previous exercises. Nevertheless "a proportion" of the hostile bombers got through. Fighter Command, moreover, limited its mission to the defense of bomber bases on British soil, leaving cities to the good will of the attackers. The Air Ministry spokesman was not too optimistic when it was all over. He thought there probably would have been some of Britain left if the bombers had been real enemies. Asked about missiles, he said, "That's another story, isn't it?"

Following "Sunbeam," the British appear to be having one of their recurrent sinking spells at the prospect of nuclear warfare. Of course there is always Mr. Dulles' old stand-by, "massive retaliation," with its twin, "deterrence." But in Britain only the Government remains heartily in favor of these gadgets, and even the London *Times* complains that under the most favorable conditions casualties would run into the millions. "Deterrence is no longer a rational policy," it concludes. It's too much like warning someone who is in a position to throw you off the roof of a skyscraper that you will try to shoot him on your way down. Nor does the *Times* hold out much hope that Britain would invite its own extinction in support of its NATO allies, any more than it believes that the United States would risk engaging in global nuclear war to deter aggression that did not directly involve American territory.

Under these lugubrious circumstances, the doctrines of Commander Sir Stephen King-Hall are attracting more serious attention than in the past. King-Hall argues that the correct policy for Great Britain is to "abandon the use of nuclear energy for military purposes," if necessary, unilaterally. Last month he spoke in favor of this policy before the Oxford Union. A packed house debated from 8:30 in the evening to midnight and the motion was lost — by 291 votes to 290. "The supporters of the radical change in our defense policy," Sir Stephen comments, ". . . were very pleased with this remarkable result." It is a result remarkable enough to warrant notice by our State Department as well as the British Foreign Office.

Election Postscript

The magnitude of the Democratic landslide has diverted public attention from what could prove to be the most significant Democratic victory in this year's election — William H. Meyer's triumph in Vermont. Everyone was a bit stunned by the fact that Vermont voters, while retaining Republican officials in the other key positions, had decided to send a Democrat to Congress for the first time in a century. But in the post-election hubbub, it remained for two Dartmouth College professors, in a short communiqué tucked away in the letters column of *The New York Times*, to point up the real significance of the Vermont vote. "You have posed the question," they wrote, "Why did Meyer win? Is it not clear that he won the admiration and votes of independent Vermonters by honestly favoring the admission of Red China to the United Nations and an end to atomic tests, and by insisting upon the duty of Americans to lead the world toward disarmament and peace?" In a word, here was a man who, without much in the way of organized support and with very little money, won election on a program which included support for the supposedly kiss-of-death proposition that China should be admitted to the United Nations. The results confirm a theory that we have harbored for some time, namely, that on such issues as peace, disarmament and recognition of Red China, the politicians of both parties are at least two Congressional elections behind the voters.

Good Brief

Attorney General William P. Rogers, in a personally signed Justice Department brief filed with the Federal Communications Commission, has made a recommendation which, if adopted and upheld in the courts, will have far-reaching effects on the conduct of the administrative agencies which play such a large part in the American economy. The instant case is the notorious Miami television Channel 10. Originally there were four applications for this valuable license to entertain, instruct and, above all, advertise. After years of hearings, the FCC gave the outlet to one of the applicants, a subsidiary of National Airlines, which is now operating it. Subsequently it turned out that the incumbent, as well as two other applicants, had engaged in approaches, *ex parte* and possibly corrupt, to some of the commissioners. Attorney General Rogers proposes that all three be disqualified, and that in future proceedings before the FCC or other regulatory agencies, petitioners who approach any official secretly shall automatically be disqualified.

In briefs filed with the commission, all the surviving applicants — the principal in the fourth case died — inveighed harshly against their competitors, but declared that they themselves were innocent of wrongdoing. One applicant, through his counsel, a former FCC chairman, agreed that the rule might be a good one for the future, but argued that if it was to be applied to past proceedings a wholesale reorganization of the broadcast and television industry would appear to be in prospect, since more or less overt forms of influence peddling has been the rule rather than the exception.

The Nation would be sorry to see the industry thrown into confusion, although by far the greater part of it is contributing little to American culture except rhapsodic praise of this or that brand of beer or cigarettes. Never-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

theless, the proposed rule seems to be a good one. It would at least set up a standard, so that officials of regulatory agencies would know what was expected of them. In the past, many have apparently discovered no impropriety in listening to private persuasion by one party or another, nor have go-betweens been lacking to bring commissioners and petitioners together. A special vice of this private lobbying is that neither the public nor the losers — and there are always losers in these proceedings — are ever fully aware of it. Like the submerged portion of an iceberg, most influence peddling is never apparent. Despite many warnings and much evidence of malfeasance, the commissioners have failed to adopt rules which would establish proper standards of behavior. They cannot complain, therefore, if the Attorney General in effect imposes such rules upon them.

As for retroactive application, most of those involved in the Miami case are lawyers or petitioners who have been well supplied with legal counsel: they knew the maneuvers were improper, and their only excuse is that everybody was doing it. The rule proposed by Mr. Rogers is firm and simple and, if adopted, it would restore a measure of public confidence in the regulatory agencies.

Rule of Thumb in the Border States

The Nation does not make a practice of offering unsolicited advice to the Republican Party, but one suggestion we would like to pass along to Mr. Alcorn and his colleagues, for otherwise it may not be brought to their attention. Dr. Charles G. Gomillion of Tuskegee Institute, in a paper presented at the National Lawyers Guild convention (November 7-10), touched upon a neglected aspect of the failure of Negroes to register or vote, in states such as Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia and Kentucky, in numbers that would more closely approximate their potential voting strength. The problem here is not one of direct intimidation, but of lack of choice at the voting booth. When border-state Negroes vote — no matter which way — they are likely to help the Southern Democrats retain the chairmanships of the standing committees of Congress, which is certainly not in the Negroes' interest. For the Republican Party has yet to be convinced that, in this area, it should sponsor candidates who would lend their support to the notion that Negroes should be encouraged to vote in the Deep South and who would strongly espouse civil rights. The consequence is that Negro voters are forced to invoke an ingenious rule-of-thumb in choosing between two undesirable candidates. According to Dr. Gomillion the rule is this: vote against the incumbent, if he is a candidate, or against the older candidate, or against the one who comes from a rural area—all on the shrewd assumption that candidates who are incumbents, elderly and from rural districts are even less desirable than those who are not. A good rule, no doubt; but somehow a better alternative should be offered if only to encourage Negro registration. Let the Republican Party sponsor candidates, some of whom might be Negroes, who will make it clear that, on civil rights at least, Negro voters are being offered a real choice.

Life Had Better Be Beautiful

Ben Hecht, the noted scrivener of stage, screen, radio, magazines and books, has recently got himself a regular spot on WABC-TV (10:50-11:15 P.M. EST) in which he acts as well as writes. If he were not a better writer than an actor, Mr. Hecht would have starved instead of growing rich: his prosperity is a testimony to his ability. Another reason his show is entertaining is his congenital irreverence. But even Mr. Hecht can go only so far, or they yank him off the air. On Friday, November 7, he wasn't yanked; he never went on.

Mr. Hecht had collected eight Bowery derelicts for a video broadcast, "Obit to a Nobody," rehearsed them for four hours in a kind of "This is Your Life" format, impressed on them that TV does not allow quite as much freedom of speech as the Bowery and, by all indications, was ready to go on with an unusual and perhaps moving show — at any rate, not the usual TV fare. The network's ostensible reason for canceling the program was the fear that someone might, despite the precautions that had been taken, say "hell," "damn" or something even more shocking. Probably the network actually believes this, but the chances are that the underlying causes lie deeper. It is a rule in American advertising that all women are young and beautiful and all men virile, and life is just one long sequence of joyful activity. No one in an ad is ever seen without a smile on his face unless he is falling off a ladder for an insurance company. Mr. Hecht was suggesting that there is also failure, despair, poverty and death. He broke a cardinal rule, he was condignly punished, and we hope he has learned his lesson. Who does he think he is — Maxim Gorki?

No. 1 College Problem

Every generation of college editors has its own topic for reiterated comment and advice. Once the almost universal theme was over-emphasis on athletics, principally football; other subjects of only slightly less general concern were fraternity hazing and compulsory chapel. Today the dominant — the obsessive — theme is "parking on campus."

In the few weeks since the opening of school this fall, college editorial writers straight across the country have viewed the parking problem and found it alarm-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing. A survey at Indiana University tags "the driving and parking problem" as "the most outstanding . . . of all the problems which our colleges and universities inherited after World War II." This generation of college students may be "silent," "careful" and "apathetic" about most issues, but mention parking and the talk turns torrid. Tempers are rising, bumpers are clashing, and relations between town and gown are at the breaking point. L. H. Csanyi, Professor of Civil Engineering at the State University of Iowa, has studied the problem nationally and reports that "nearly every college and university in the U.S." is faced with it and that no easy solution is in sight. We know of one university (Oberlin) where there is no parking problem, because there are no cars. But this is not a solution; it is an evasion of the fact, obvious to any clear-eyed observer, that as long as cars are available, a student without one is as great an anomaly as a housewife without a detergent.

Our own suggestion is to raze all engineering schools to make way for parking areas. After that, time will cure the problem: no engineering schools, no engineers; no engineers, no cars; no cars, no parking problem — for students or anyone else.

Discrimination in Housing

The Fund for the Republic recently provided $400,000 for the work of a group of distinguished citizens as members of a private Commission on Race and Housing. The commission's findings are that 27,000,000 Americans — nearly one-sixth of the population of the United States — are restricted in opportunities to live in neighborhoods of their choice. Of course, many citizens cannot live where they would like because they can't pay for the house or apartment, but these 27,000,000 are barred because they lack, not the money, but the right color of skin, which is of course white. Most of them are Negroes, but Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Orientals suffer under the same disability. And of course Jews, although white, are often barred: they are not white enough.

The present focus is on discrimination in education, but discrimination in housing, which the North shares with the South, is probably nearly as burdensome to the victims. Moreover, residential segregation leads directly to segregation in schools, churches, hospitals, places of public recreation, and wherever human beings can be separated. The question, the commission points out, is not solely a moral one. The housing industry is hampered by ethnic restrictions, and builders, brokers and suppliers are deprived of markets. Many acquiesce in the restrictions only for fear of community disapproval. The commission appeals to real estate, mortgage financing, public relations, legal research and similar groups to support a free housing market, which does not now exist. It calls on President Eisenhower to appoint a committee to draw up a program for the prompt elimination of racial discrimination in federal housing and urban-renewal projects.

The commission has done an altogether excellent job and its members, and the Fund for the Republic, have earned the thanks of the country. They have also earned the right to be taken seriously, and not to have their report ignored as merely one more scroll of good intentions. They point out that segregation vitiates American appeals to the "uncommitted" peoples of Asia and Africa. Of course it does, but we don't owe it to communism to eliminate segregation. We owe it to ourselves.

LOST CLASS OF '59 . . *by Dan Wakefield*

Norfolk, Virginia

THE LARCHMONT Baptist church in Norfolk, a three-story brick structure with stained glass windows of modest conception, is a picture of placid, middle-class, urban life. Around it sit small, neat homes on trim, leaf-raked yards; above its door is the inscription: "To teach and preach the Lord Jesus Christ." But inside are 120 youngsters who are being taught algebra, history and English. Last week Mrs. Atwood G. Abbitt, a plump, attractive lady with a pleasant smile, who in happier times is a junior high school student adviser, sat in one of the church's small rooms below a map of the Holy Land and explained the situation that had brought her here: "It's like the irresistible force meeting the immovable object."

The irresistible force is equal rights for the Negro, the immovable object is the South's long tradition of racial segregation, and Mrs. Atwood Abbitt, along with the 120 students in the church and, indeed, the entire 290,000 citizens of Norfolk, are caught in the head-on collision. For six weeks the 10,000 students of the six junior and senior high schools of the city have been locked out of classrooms shut down by Virginia's laws of "massive resistance" to desegregation, brought into force here this fall when the local school board accepted seventeen Negro students for entry into the formerly all-white schools. The same laws have shut out 3,000 other Virginia students in Charlottesville and Warren County,

DAN WAKEFIELD is a staff contributor.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but Norfolk is the hardest hit—and has, in turn, hit back the hardest of any of the affected areas. The battle is still at a stalemate—though the lives of the people it affects are not; and however the conflict is finally resolved, the losses to the individuals concerned are already enormous. The teachers at the Baptist church who have volunteered to tutor 120 students cannot speak of what is happening without speaking of what has been lost.

"We live," Mrs. Abbitt explained, "from day to day. Every day we pick up the paper to see what will happen next. But the sad part is that even if schools were to open tomorrow, we'll have lost a good many of our students. There are at least 3,000 gone, and we don't know where they are. Some of them have moved and not told anyone. I met a boy on the street the other day—he used to be one of my traffic patrol captains—a fine boy. He'd moved over to Hampton to go to school, and I hadn't even known. Of course he'll finish, but he won't have any chance for a scholarship now, and that means he won't get to college."

THE students who would have been seniors in Norfolk's public schools this year are now referred to as "The Lost Class of '59"—perhaps the first generation ever to be branded "lost" as the result of a state law. A survey of what has happened to them appeared in the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot*, which said that "just under half" of the 1,037 Norfolk seniors may not be back, even if schools open this year. Some have gotten jobs, some have gotten married, some have joined the service, some have just "drifted."

The loss is felt perhaps most deeply (because it is understood most deeply) by Norfolk's teachers, most of whom, though they will remain on the state payroll till June, have volunteered to teach in the makeshift tutoring classes either for no pay or for just enough to meet expenses. Mrs. Abbitt, who supervises the classes in the Baptist church tutoring group, led her visitor up the narrow halls to meet "one of our outstanding teachers," who was once the college adviser of Granby High.

"We'll Show Those Fellows!"

Out of a Sunday school room jammed with students came Miss Ellen Blake, a tall, gray-haired lady who leaned forward to speak with a sharp and angry conviction.

"I can tell you this—Granby sends 60-80 per cent of its graduates on to college, but it isn't just by accident. Some of it is a result of 'selling,' and helping with scholarships and proper guidance. Now, parents who are college graduates are still doing all they can to get their children to college and I'm writing letters and trying to help. But what I'm worried about is the little girl whose mother was a hairdresser, say, and who wouldn't have thought of going to college unless she had the proper encouragement. She's lost. And even the others will have trouble getting in. I've been in contact with college-entrance people, and ones I know say they'll take students I've had in these tutoring classes if I recommend them, but you see, it's largely going to depend on personal relationships. Some students will just be out of luck."

Miss Blake mentioned that the annual "College Night" activities in which representatives from different colleges came to the city to talk to seniors would not be held this year. Although the teachers were offered the use of the building to hold it, they decided not to.

"We can use the building for meetings," Miss Blake said, "for PTA, for bird-watching, for the garden club, for anything but teaching. Well, if we can't use it for teaching we don't want to use it for anything. We are very *irked*."

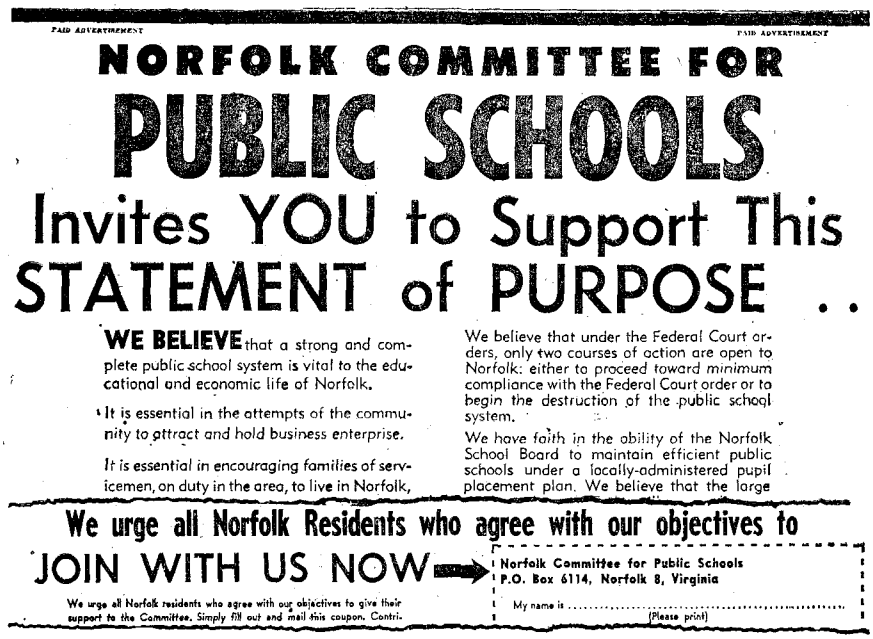
The teachers not only of Norfolk but all Virginia expressed their displeasure a few weeks ago when, at a state-wide meeting of the Virginia Education Association, they voted by a majority of four to one in favor of opening the schools, even if this meant integration. As one of the Norfolk teachers explained the vote, "There was a real unity among us all—but don't misunderstand. We weren't voting for integration; we were voting for public education."

THIS IS WHAT the issue has now come down to, and the teachers are in the front ranks of citizens demanding continuance of public schools. Their stand has brought their "loyalty" into question by state officials. Lieutenant Governor A. E. S. Stephens told the Virginia Education Association convention that ". . . When you pick up the papers and see that a large proportion of teachers have voted not to participate in the private-school movement, you ask yourself 'Where is their loyalty?'"

Actually, the teachers of Norfolk have pitched in wholeheartedly to run the temporary tutoring classes like the one at the Baptist church. An estimated 3,000 students are attending classes in churches and homes throughout the city. What the teachers refused to take part in was the Tidewater Educational Foundation, a private-school system begun by leaders of the Defenders of States Rights and Individual Sovereignty (Virginia's version of the White Citizens Councils) which had originally conceived a full-scale private-school plan to handle more than 5,000 students on a permanent basis. The lawyer of the teachers' organization warned them that they would be breaking their contract with the state if they taught in that school, and none went into it. As a result, the plan has dwindled to accommodations for about 250 students. Another estimated 500 pupils are attending schools outside Norfolk and 940 are enrolled in adult night classes in South Norfolk.

The protest of these teachers can of course be seen in part as a "special

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



PAID ADVERTISEMENT PAID ADVERTISEMENT

NORFOLK COMMITTEE FOR

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Invites YOU to Support This STATEMENT of PURPOSE . .

WE BELIEVE that a strong and complete public school system is vital to the educational and economic life of Norfolk.

It is essential in the attempts of the community to attract and hold business enterprise.

It is essential in encouraging families of servicemen, on duty in the area, to live in Norfolk,

We believe that under the Federal Court orders, only two courses of action are open to Norfolk: either to proceed toward *minimum* compliance with the Federal Court order or to *begin* the destruction of the public school system.

We have faith in the ability of the Norfolk School Board to maintain efficient public schools under a locally-administered pupil placement plan. We believe that the large

We urge all Norfolk Residents who agree with our objectives to JOIN WITH US NOW

Norfolk Committee for Public Schools
P.O. Box 6114, Norfolk 8, Virginia

My name is .....
(Please print)

We urge all Norfolk residents who agree with our objectives to give their support to the Committee. Simply fill out and mail this coupon. Contri-

Scores of citizens signed this appeal for the reopening of Norfolk's schools—with integration. It appeared as a full-page ad in the Virginian-Pilot *of Sept. 24.*

interest" lobby, since they are concerned with their jobs and long-worked-for pensions. Some have already taken other jobs, and education students are wondering whether to risk going into teaching now. One teacher at the Baptist church group told about her niece, who had just graduated and was supposed to teach Home Economics in a Norfolk high school this fall, but now was getting restless: "I talked to her just the other day, and she told me, 'Aunt Lizzie, come spring, if nothing has happened, I'm going into an industry job.'"

BUT there is more than just personal welfare that is motivating most of the teachers, and it is easy to recognize in talking with them. It is a belief in and love of their work and what it means. Many of them strongly believe that integration will be harmful. As is often stated, segregation is "a way of life," but as Norfolk now is learning, teaching is a way of life too, and its values have won out in the teachers' vote—"not for integration, but for public education." I do not have any idea how much, if at all, the presence of Negroes in her class is going to disturb Miss Ellen Blake; but I know that not getting the hairdresser's daughter into college is going to disturb her a lot. As many citizens of Norfolk have said in the past weeks: "We are learning to appreciate our teachers."

Unlike Little Rock, where only the ministers, *The Arkansas Gazette*, and the Women's Committee to Open Our Public Schools have spoken up for public education, in Norfolk not only the teachers but a whole range of community leaders and organizations have come forward in public to demand that the schools be opened in compliance with the federal law. Prominent businessmen, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, sixty Protestant ministers, students of the closed schools and thousands of individuals who signed their names to full-page newspaper ads have asked that schools be opened. When this rash of protest appeared immediately after the schools were closed on September 27, the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot*, which has opposed the massive-resistance laws from their inception, editorialized that

> . . . The new voices in the school-closed communities must be heard. And they must be answered with truths. The cliché that states' rights must be won now or lost forever is not the truth. The shibboleth that the Supreme Court's order may be legally ignored is not the truth. The myth that Virginia is in contest with alien forces is not the truth. The truth is that Virginia can open all the schools, and cannot with justice and good sense keep them closed. Virginia and its children need their schools.

But Virginia's political leaders have so far remained mute in answer to the need. The Rev. James Brewer of the Norfolk Unitarian church led a delegation from the Committee for Public Schools to Richmond with a petition signed by 6,190 Norfolk citizens asking that Governor Almond return the schools from state control to local operation on a desegregated basis. The state's massive-resistance laws, passed in special sessions of the state legislature in 1956 and 1958, provide that the Governor close and take over any desegregated public school. There is, however, an "escape clause" which says that if both the school board and the city council of a community ask to have the schools returned to be operated locally on a desegregated basis (and without state aid), the Governor may turn them over to the community. The first "catch" in the clause is, of course, state aid, which varies in Virginia from 17-88 per cent of local school budgets. In Norfolk it is approximately 20 per cent, or close to $2,500,000, and each Norfolk pupil would have to pay roughly $60 a year to make it up. The second "catch" in the escape clause is that the law says the Governor *may* return the schools to the community under the stated conditions. The members of the Committee for Public Schools who visited with Governor Almond came away with the impression that he wouldn't give back the schools even if the Norfolk school board and city council made the request.

The Norfolk city council, unlike the school board, has not yet been willing to make the request. Many of the councilmen are said to be strong segregationists, and even beyond those considerations is the matter of staying in favor with the electorate. To keep on solid ground in that respect, the council ordered a special "informative" referendum for November 18, quite similar to the one Governor Orval Faubus ordered in Little Rock.

The *Virginian-Pilot* attacked the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

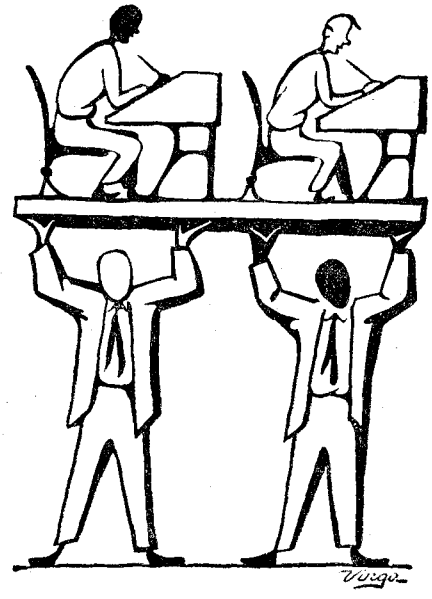
referendum plan on grounds that it wasn't legally binding, and also that four suits testing the constitutionality of the school-closing law are now in the courts and will be argued within a week after the referendum. The most important of the suits is a test case arranged by the state to go before the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals on November 24. It is the hope of those citizens who want the schools to open that the Virginia court, rather than the federal court, will rule the massive-resistance laws unconstitutional, thus relieving the decision from charges of "federal" or "alien" intervention. In the meantime, some members of the Committee for Public Schools filed an injunction against the referendum, holding that it was not binding, not legal and would cost $6,000. The injunction has been denied.

NONE OF THE partisans on either side was paying much attention to the referendum, since the segregationists feel sure of victory and the people who want the schools opened are sure that the referendum can make no difference in the final outcome anyway. The segregationists are on solid ground, though not as solid as a few months ago. A fascinating indication of the effect of school closing was reflected in the voting for Senator Byrd's re-election.

Byrd won, as is his habit, by 70 per cent of the vote, but his protest opponent on the massive-resistance issue, Dr. Louise O. Wensel, polled her greatest strength in communities where schools had been closed. Without an organization, Dr. Wensel, a complete unknown, drew more than 100,000 votes as an independent candidate for the Senatorial seat. Proportionately, her vote was consistently highest in communities where the most children are out of school. In Mecklenburg County, for instance, in the southern, most deeply segregationist part of the state, where no schools have yet been closed, she drew only 347 votes against 3,399 for Byrd. In Charlottesville, where more than 1,000 children are out of school, she had 1,401 votes while Byrd had 2,690; and in Norfolk, where 10,000 children are out of school, she polled 8,720 and Byrd drew 13,231.

In Norfolk, the voting cannot reflect the feeling of the whole community because of the peculiar situation of the Navy personnel. Roughly 40-50,000 Navy men who are married and have families live in Norfolk, some for only a few years, some on a long-term basis, but only a tiny minority of them are registered to vote here. State law says that all voters must pay personal state-income tax, and few Navy men are willing to pay the price especially since the right to vote locally seems not especially important in ordinary times. The Navy is, of course, concerned with the school situation because of its personnel, but feels it can take no official action. Officers sent here in the past few years have been warned in advance that the public schools might not be available for their children, and are told they will have to deal with the problem as individuals. The Navy cannot officially instruct the officers on this, but has intimated that where families include school-age children and the assignment to Norfolk is temporary, it might be wisest to leave the families behind. Although the situation has caused immense strain for the Navy, with a flood of complaints and problems to the chaplain's office, the Navy feels it cannot permit school considerations to take precedence over military considerations.

Another hidden source of Norfolk voting strength lies in the Negro community. Negroes make up 27 per cent of the city population, but at present only 9,500 are registered to vote. R. D. Robertson, president of the local NAACP chapter, says there are 15,000 more potential Negro voters.



Mr. Robertson says that the NAACP is, of course, constantly working on getting out the Negro vote, and that since the school crisis the job has been much easier. Robertson is a tall, ramrod-straight man who is a business agent for a local of the Amalgamated Meatpackers Union. He sat straight in an easy chair of his house in the winding streets of Norfolk's Negro ghetto last week and told his visitor that "We're not making any noise here —you won't see any 'statements' from the Norfolk NAACP chapter. We're just keeping quiet and going through the courts. We're staying in the courts. We're just going to wait till law and order prevail."

R. D. ROBERTSON waits, as he has waited all his life, and his children wait too, but time is getting short. Political reporters in Virginia are already predicting a special session of the legislature in January to revise the massive-resistance laws. By then the court tests will be determined, and chances are that the laws will have been found unconstitutional. No one expects that the legislature will quietly accept this, and the alternatives being considered range from some sort of compromise local-option plan to complete abandonment of the Virginia public schools. The last choice is being seriously debated, and the *Virginian-Pilot* recently ran an editorial which took the "controversial" stand of supporting public education.

The Virginians who feel that this heritage is more valuable than the heritage of white supremacy are fighting to convince the public, but they admit they are fighting uphill, even in Norfolk. Community leaders fear now that the initial shock of school closing, which brought roars of protest, is wearing off, largely because of the success of the tutoring plans. This has been especially

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

true in Charlottesville, where the group which began as a protest movement against the closings has diverted most of its energies into the tutoring classes. In Norfolk, the Unitarian church has refused to lend space for classes on grounds that it only allows the public to sink back into apathy and avoid facing the real issue. A sad indication of the truth of this fear was revealed when after the first week of outcry, a public rally for opening the schools held two weeks later drew only 1,000 people instead of the 3,500 expected to fill the hall.

It is easy to stroll by the leaf-blown lawn of the Larchmont Baptist church and feel that after all, children are still being taught, the trees are still turning in the way they always do in the fall of the year, and the occasional exhaust of a starting Buick is the only discordant note in this world. It is quiet here, as it is all over America, and it is easy to forget—easy to forget about R. D. Robertson, way across town, who sits proud and tall and unbending in his chair and waits for "law and order to prevail" and will not disappear because we refuse to think about him.

E. U. Condon

BOMBS-FOR-PEACE HYPOCRISY

WAS PROJECT PLOWSHARE designed to complicate the job of getting political agreement among the nuclear powers to stop further tests of nuclear weapons? So designed or not, there are strong indications that it will prove to be a danger to the current negotiations at Geneva. Those who believe that a ban on further bomb tests is vitally important to world peace and world sanitation may have to find a way to neutralize this danger before it becomes a major stumbling block.

Project Plowshare was initiated in 1957 at the Atomic Energy Commission Laboratory in Livermore, California, for the purpose of studying possible peacetime uses of the nuclear explosives themselves, as contrasted with the use of nuclear energy for power production.

A number of speeches and statements on the subject have already been made by Atomic Energy Commissioner Willard Libby, and the project has been set up at the laboratory that is directed by Edward Teller, "father" of the hydrogen bomb. Both Libby and Teller have been fighting vigorously for unabated continuance of the nuclear-armaments race, basing their position on assertions that no reliable scheme for enforcing a test ban could be devised. Until last spring their argument so impressed the White House and State Department that it had become the foundation of government policy.

There the matter might have ended except that President Eisenhower's Science Advisory Committee (headed by President James R. Killian of Massachusetts Institute of Technology) includes some members of the highest scientific standing who, on the basis of the same scientific information, have come to the very opposite conclusion. Professor H. A. Bethe of Cornell University, a member of the committee, was on the Los Alamos staff from its beginning. His standing in nuclear physics is at least equal to that of Teller. He is generally credited with having persuaded the President that adequate means of enforcement exist, and with having won the President over to the idea of calling last summer's Geneva conference of technical experts from the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States. It will be recalled that this conference agreed — contrary to what Teller and Libby had been saying — that detection of clandestine tests is feasible, and spelled out a definite detection plan (which has not yet been made public).

This favorable result led to the calling of the "political" conference on the same subject that opened in Geneva a fortnight ago. It was received, at the time, with great satisfaction by thousands of scientists and others who believe it is important to quit shooting radioactive poisons into the atmosphere of the whole earth, and to begin to take real steps looking toward nuclear disarmament.

BUT NOW THAT the new Geneva talks have started, officials in the Department of Defense and the AEC are making statements seemingly intended to undermine public confidence in the agreement reached last summer by the technicians. Thus Lt. Gen. Arthur G. Trudeau declared that the Russians must have found out about some of our summer tests through espionage, since these could not have been detected by any known technical means. He flatly asserted — without supporting evidence and in contradiction of the Geneva findings — that tests are really not detectable. The Russians claim to have detected thirty-two tests carried on by us. We now acknowledge thirty, although earlier we had publicly acknowledged only fourteen. (It has been suggested that we have been playing a numbers game designed to discover how good the Russians' detection scheme really

---

E. U. CONDON, Wayman Crow Professor of Physics at Washington U. (St. Louis), was a member of the formerly secret S-1 Committee which initiated the U.S. atomic-bomb project before Pearl Harbor. He was scientific adviser to the Special Senate Committee on Atomic Energy of the 79th Congress—the committee which wrote the legislation establishing the Atomic Energy Commission. He also served as Director of the National Bureau of Standards, 1945-51.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is. Perhaps we had hoped that the Russians would not detect our unannounced tests, thus demonstrating the unreliability of their detection apparatus. If this was the plan, it boomeranged; the Russians did detect our tests and reported accurately when they occurred.)

Returning now to Project Plowshare: Chemical explosives, such as gunpowder, dynamite and TNT, have civilian as well as military uses. In the same way, it is quite plausible that peacetime uses could be found for nuclear explosives. That is what Project Plowshare was set up to do; in itself, this is a laudable objective. But in order to develop peacetime uses, more tests will have to be made. And U.S. officials are already laying the groundwork for an exception in favor of such tests in any weapons-test ban that may be agreed upon in Geneva.

WHETHER or not this move is intended to wreck all hope of reaching an agreement at Geneva, it certainly will operate in that direction. This is because, although means exist for detecting tests at considerable distances, no means exist for detecting the *motive* of the persons who set off a nuclear explosion. If civilian-use tests are exempt from the ban, then we might as well have no ban at all, since any nation wanting to test a bomb need only announce that the test was for civilian use — and who could deny it? (Incidentally, the same amount of radioactive poison is put into the air whether the nuclear explosion is set off for military or for civilian purpose—a point not often mentioned in discussions of harnessing the bombs to peacetime uses.)

Is Project Plowshare really meant as a subterfuge to conceal a continued program of weapons development? If so, we cannot expect it to fool the Russians, since the idea is theirs. Americans scoffed when the late Andrei Vishinsky said in 1946 that the USSR was using nuclear explosives in Siberia "to move mountains and to change the course of rivers." We declared this was merely a cover-up for Soviet entry into the atomic-bomb business — which it probably was. But now, when Commissioner Libby brings up Plowshare on the eve of the Geneva weapons-test-ban conference, and announces that he could use atom bombs to build a harbor in Northwest Alaska, (but complains that nobody wants one there), we seem to expect the Russians to be too stupid to suspect what we may be up to.

NOT ENOUGH is known publicly at this time to make a judgment as to whether Project Plowshare has any technical merit. Some of its detailed ideas make sense. Others do not.

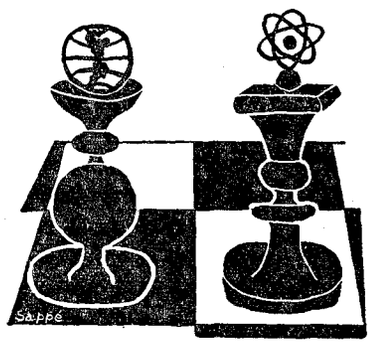
Commissioner Libby's proposal to use underground nuclear explosions to make radioactive isotopes (a great boon to industry and medicine) makes no sense at all. This is a more serious misrepresentation of the facts than the AEC's "inadvertent" press release of last spring which implied that a Nevada test was detected only two hundred miles away by seismographs when in fact it was detected more than two thousand miles away.

True, radioactive isotopes could be made this way. Every explosion makes isotopes: this is what makes tests a health hazard. But the fact is that reactors now in operation are already producing a vast over-supply of isotopes for which we have absolutely no use. Libby knows this because the surplus is giving rise to a waste disposal and a pollution problem which the AEC is spending large sums of money trying to solve. Indeed, the problem of waste disposal now constitutes one of the serious impediments to development of an atomic-power industry.

While some civilian uses for nuclear explosives might represent real technical gains over present practices in mining and civil engineering, these uses, too, will present fallout and contamination problems. *But most important, nuclear explosions cannot be allowed to be used freely for any purpose without nullifying attempts to police a weapons-test ban.*

A way out of this dilemma is possible. We are spending great sums on technical aid to underdeveloped countries. We are interested in sharing our know-how with our friends and hope to win more friends by this policy. We could now propose at Geneva that all research and testing for civilian uses of nuclear explosives be carried on cooperatively under United Nations management. This would put an end to all suspicion that the United States set up Project Plowshare to wreck the possibilities of enforcing a weapons-test-ban agreement. Moreover, as a U.N. project, progress could be expected to be more rapid, for everyone's ideas and skills would be used — and the results would redound to the advantage of all mankind. If research of this kind happened to produce information of military significance as a by-product, this too would be freely available to all; no one power could use the project to gain military advantage over another.

In any case, nuclear explosives for civilian purposes must, in the long run, come under a world regulatory authority. For they, too, spread radio-



active poisons over the whole earth, and it is a matter of world concern whether the advantages from their use outweigh the dangers.

In a way, Project Plowshare is the "clean bomb" of 1958 — a means by which the proponents of continued testing hope to see the test-ban conference fail. In 1957, Teller and AEC officials promised that, with more testing, a "clean" H-bomb could be produced. This was advanced as a humanitarian argument for continued testing. Such a "clean" bomb test was announced with great fanfare for last summer and observers from other countries were invited to come and see how clean it was. But when the time came last August, the test was quietly canceled. Whether intended or not, Project Plowshare certainly could produce failure at Geneva unless we prove our sincerity by offering to convert the whole technical question into a wide-open, fully-shared United Nations project.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Philip Noel-Baker

RESEARCH DRIVES the ARMS RACE

I BELIEVE the abolition of military research by all nations, under effective international control, to be the most important and the most urgent of all reforms today.

This statement will surprise some people who are unfamiliar with the facts, or who have not taken time to reflect on the cost—and the results—of military research. It will shock others who remember the civil benefits which military research has undoubtedly produced, and who regard it as one of the dynamic forces in the developing economy of the modern industrial state.

Nevertheless, I believe the statement to be profoundly, indeed horrifyingly, true.

What are the facts about military research?

For more than eighty years the engineering, metallurgical and chemical advances due to science have been progressively applied to increasing the striking power of armaments by land, sea and air. But it is only since 1939 that scientific research has become a major factor in armament policy. In that year, Britain spent £7.9 million on military research and development carried out by all defense departments; this was on the eve of Hitler's war, when armaments, in Sir Winston Churchill's phrase, were "at a towering height," far greater than ever before. By 1947, the £7.9 million had grown to £40 million; by 1952 to £80 million; by 1957 to £204 million (dollar equivalents: from $37.9 million in 1939 to $571 million in 1957). In 1939 the United States spent $26.4 million; in 1952, $821 million; in 1957, $5,300 million. In 1939, neutral Sweden spent nothing; in 1945, 2 million kronor ($386,000); in 1957, 21.8 million ($4,207,000). Even Sweden has increased its expenditure for military research by eleven times since the end of Hitler's war. All this money has been spent for the development of new weapons, and for making existing weapons cheaper, more powerful and more efficient. And not only money is involved; the work has absorbed much of the scientific genius of the leading nations.

THE NATIONS have certainly got what they have paid for. In 1945, the Hiroshima A-bomb multiplied by one thousand the explosive power of the most destructive weapon ever previously used; by 1952, fission A-bombs had been made ten (some say twenty-five) times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb; in 1954, the Bikini fission-fusion-fission H-bomb multiplied by 1,000 the explosive power of the Hiroshima bomb. The outer sheath of the H-bomb, composed of 1,000 pounds of the common uranium-238, added ten megatons, or the equivalent of ten million tons of TNT, to its explosive force. This is six times the total explosive force of the bombs dropped on Germany by the Allies in six years of war. Uranium-238 is so cheap that the extra ten megatons cost only $15,000.

Since 1945, Hitler's nerve-gas, tabun, has been made ten times more effective. You cannot see tabun, nor taste it, nor smell it; three drops ingested, inhaled, or on the skin, are fatal; it penetrates your clothing. Hanson Baldwin of *The New York Times* said long ago that tabun has made obsolete all known gas masks and protective clothing, and that "not a square inch of skin can be safely exposed" to it. The Chief Chemical Officer of the U. S. Army said in 1955 that the danger of chemical weapons was as great a threat as that of A-bombs, and that by their use "mental derangement might be deliberately inspired." In plain English, tabun drives you mad; then, after some hours of great agony, you die. If what the U. S. Chemical Corps and Mr. Baldwin say is true, there can be little hope of any real defense against tabun for civilians, and not much for troops.

By 1945 both Hitler and the Allies had made great progress with biological weapons of various kinds. Major-General Brock Chisholm, who was Chief of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps throughout the war, and then the first Director of the World Health Organization, has revealed that in 1944 the Allied Staffs thought that Hitler meant to use "a certain biological" against Britain in his V-1 (*the flying bomb*). "We knew," he says, "that, if the Germans used this biological in their flying bombs, *they could kill millions of people, and perhaps everybody south of the Tweed,* and there would be nothing, *repeat nothing,* that we could do about it." Information was fed into Hitler's Intelligence Service to warn him that we were "ready for biological warfare." "We had, of course," says General Chisholm, "stocks of this biological for use in retaliation." And he adds: "There are very large stocks of this weapon available today. *The potential dangers of biological warfare are much greater now than they were in 1944.* Research is at present going forward with a view to making the bacteria of the more general diseases, e.g. cholera, typhus, etc., much more virulent. . . . This line of investigation is very dangerous to the future of mankind."

NOT MANY people remember that in 1945 an Allied Air Force, with piston-engined aircraft and conventional bombs, burnt 83,000 people to death in Tokyo in a single night. The incendiary bombs available today are far more potent than those of 1945.

The "improvement" of "conventional" weapons since 1945 has been no less striking, and little less dangerous, than the development of the special instruments of mass destruction. Hitler's V-1s and V-2s have been replaced by IRBMs with an

---

PHILIP NOEL-BAKER, M.P., served Britain as Minister of State in the Foreign Office and as Secretary of State for Air. He is the author of The Arms Race — A Program for World Disarmament.

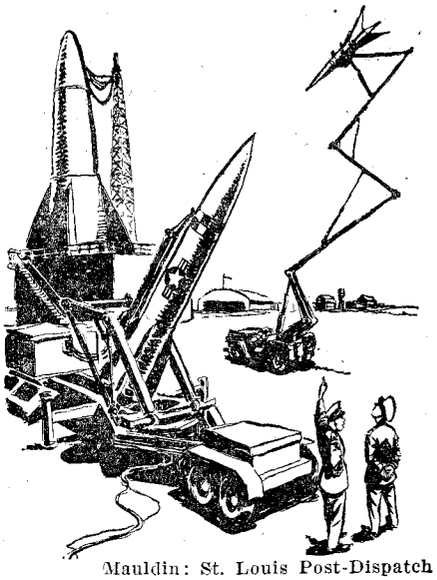
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

effective range of 800 to 1,000 miles. Reliable ICBMs will be in quantity production in many countries in a few years. The most effective bombing aircraft in World War II were the British Lancaster and the U. S. B-17 and B-29. The Lancaster had a speed of 250 mph, a range of 1,000 miles and it could carry the ten-ton "block-buster." The present U. S. bomber, B-52, has a speed of over 600 miles; it can carry nuclear bombs to any target in the world and return to its base. The latest Russian jet-bombers are just as good. The modern aircraft carrier displaces over 80,000 tons, and carries 100 jet aircraft of the latest design; one carrier costs over $200 million to build. The latest nuclear-powered submarine displaces 5,900 tons—as large as most of the cruisers of pre-war days. It can travel for months under water at a speed much greater than that of merchant ships. The chance for surface shipping in a future war is almost nil; and Britain and Europe depend for their very life on surface shipping. All other types of conventional weapons—tanks, guns, fire-control systems, troop carriers, flame-throwers, machine guns, rifles—have undergone similar revolutionary improvements since 1945. Radar, electronics, television, all the marvels of modern science, have been turned to military use.

There has been nothing like this in history before. In thirteen years, science has multiplied the destructive power of armaments in an almost unimaginable way. In their Vienna Declaration at the Third Pugwash Conference, seventy world-famous scientists unanimously declared that war with nuclear weapons might exterminate mankind. But there are now many ways in which civilization could be destroyed. And year by year the pace of this competition in military research grows fiercer, the resources given to it are greater, the advances made are swifter and more terrible, and the strategic plans of General Staffs are more completely and more dangerously founded on the use of the "modern" means of war. In 1955, the U. S. Secretary of the Army approved a report which urged the development of "a complete family of chemical, biological and radiological weapons for actual use, if necessary." No one can blame the Secretary; the Russian, British and other governments are doing the same. That is how the arms race always works; and the competition in military research has become the most dangerous form of the arms race today.

OF COURSE, military research gives results that are of value for human advance. Year by year, the scientists engaged uncover new basic knowledge, and evolve practical applications of principles old and new; it would be astonishing if some of the new knowledge and techniques could not be put to civilian as well as military use. In fact, the contribution made to industrial technology in recent years has been considerable. But three observations are in order. First, the contributions are often overstated. It was recently asserted that among "the better-known" discoveries which military research has presented to civil welfare were: "yellow-fever eradication, chlorination of water, nuclear power, blood-plasm substitutes, the modern aircraft, high-temperature alloys, and the modern automobile automatic transmission." A subsidiary list of "less-known contributions" was added, including fire-retardant paints, helicopters, anti-icing equipment, new plastics, advanced weather-prediction techniques and automatic electronic computers.

It is grotesque to suggest that all these inventions would not have been made if there had been no military research. The Wright brothers had produced a heavier-than-air machine, Bleriot had flown the English Channel, there had been a decade of important progress, before any war department showed the slightest interest in aviation. This progress would inevitably have continued even if there had been no world wars and no military research; indeed, without war, more and earlier attention might have been given to the development of civil aircraft. And is it irrelevant to recall the death of hundreds of thousands of airmen, and the destruction by air bombardment of millions of lives and immeasurable amounts of property,



Mauldin: St. Louis Post-Dispatch

"And THAT'S an ANTI-anti-missile-missile."

of irreplaceable architectural and artistic treasures, which have resulted from the adaptation of the Wright brothers' invention to war use? For this, in fact, was the fearful price paid for the more rapid progress which military research in aviation involved.

THE CASE on meteorology is even stronger. Weather prediction is of great practical importance to agriculture, shipping, aviation, railways and many other kinds of economic enterprise. If we could predict the weather even a fortnight ahead, it would mean a large addition to mankind's annual income of usable wealth. Who can doubt today that the physicists, who have probed the secrets of the atom, could have found out what makes the weather, if they had worked on meteorology instead of on the miraculous nuclear bomb? The claims made about the civil benefits of military research are not only overstated; sometimes they seriously distort the truth.

Second, the civil benefits of military research constitute only a tiny proportion of its output; and they are an accidental, not an intentional result. Its overwhelmingly important effect is to increase the complexity, and thus the cost, of armaments; to give them immensely greater destructive power; to increase the possibility of overwhelming, surprise attack; and thus to add to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dangers of the arms race and to the risk that unprovoked aggression might succeed.

Third, all military research inevitably involves a very grievous social waste. Since 1945, a great proportion of the most distinguished scientists have devoted their entire efforts to increasing mankind's power to kill and to destroy. But science, rightly used, could — as the Pugwash scientists in their Vienna Declaration said — provide mankind with an ever-increasing understanding of the forces of nature, and the means of harnessing them to constructive purposes. If since 1945 the scientists engaged in perfecting armaments had been employed instead on peaceful industrial, agricultural and medical research, they might already have laid the foundations of a veritable revolution in man's individual and social life.

One practical example of the social waste involved may usefully be given. Malaria has been one of the great scourges of mankind. Some historians believe that it was the cause of the decline of ancient Greece. It still kills three million people every year; it saps the vitality, and thus greatly reduces the agricultural and industrial output, of hundreds of millions more. But it can be dealt with. In Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia, it has, for the time being, almost disappeared. The World Health Organization declares that, at the cost of a relatively trifling sum — perhaps $2 billion — it could be definitely and permanently wiped out everywhere. But governments have refused the money; they are spending much greater sums in trying to reach the moon because they hope that knowledge of space travel can be adapted to military ends.

To argue, as even some economists have done, that our vast expenditure on military research is justified by the civil benefits it brings, is to accept the reasoning of Charles Lamb's Chinese, who thought he must burn down a house to get roast pork.

I KNOW, of course, that military research is most unlikely to be abolished until a general treaty of disarmament is signed. My purpose is to argue that its abolition is an indispensable part of any first-stage disarmament treaty.

There are three reasons why this is so. First, the purpose of such a treaty is to create a stable balance of military strength among the signatories. But the purpose of military research is to upset the existing balance through the production of weapons cheaper and more powerful than those possessed by rival states. As long as military research continues, there can be no firm basis for a disarmament treaty.

Second, unless military research is ended very soon, it may become impossible to make a treaty in which governments and their peoples will feel real confidence. The reduction or abolition of military aircraft and of missiles could certainly be controlled effectively today. But once missiles have been perfected, produced in quantity and emplaced in underground launching sites, then — as Dr. Seymour Melman points out in his important book, *Inspection for Disarmament* — detection would become extremely difficult, if not impossible.

Third, as Dr. Melman and his colleagues also point out, continued military research will inevitably develop "ultimate weapons of a type which are explicitly designed to be uninspectable, and which therefore would doom the world to eternal anxiety and hatred." When we look at what has been accomplished in the last thirteen years, we must take seriously Professor Isidor Rabi's warning: "We have no reason to believe that development will be slower in the future."

Military research has already destroyed the hope of any effective national defense; the British Minister of Defense has said again and again that there *is* no defense against the weapons that have been developed in the last thirteen years.

Those who think that military research should continue are convinced, consciously or subconsciously, that the present system of conducting international relations cannot be changed, that the arms race must go on, even if it be true that it must end in war. They may be right; but if they are, mankind is doomed.

All Alone in the Supermarket . . *by David Cort*

THE SUPERMARKET may be said to give half the people of America the most regular, satisfying, ennobling and masterful experience that they can confidently look forward to in any given week. In great cities, many women regard the local supermarket as the only stable social force in their environment. They cash all their husbands' checks there; everything on their kitchen shelves is transposed from there; they gossip about the surly girl at the cigarette counter; they pride themselves on wangling six items past the "express" check-out limited to five items; they delicately bump their carts on the Achilles tendon of the other customers and indelicately rebuke those who bump them. In the supermarket they feel that indispensable justification: they are doing something important, functional, respectable, American and godly. It is incredible but true that a quarrel in a supermarket has a tone of the sacerdotal about it.

I work at home. I live near a supermarket. I am in and out of it several times a day.

Some sort of market research discovered that supermarket patrons blinked less often than normal as they wheeled the cart under control, steered it imperiously down the aisle, began to peer at the stacked shelves

DAVID CORT is a frequent contributor.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and piled the cart with commodities to match the unpremeditated sugar plums suddenly dancing in their heads. The unblinking consumer is not embarrassed by having to voice her desires, perhaps discreditable, to the other human being, the clerk. She sees, she desires, and a moment later the coveted thing is buried in her cart, all but secretly. In this way she buys as greedily as if she were stealing.

This little fact is worth several billions of dollars a year in the consuming economy of America and, as the idea spreads, of the rest of the world. Its terrible power is that of leaving a woman alone with her desires, not for herself exclusively but for her loved ones. She has this dream of how good she is to her family — a noble dream, which makes the world go round. But here it is diffused and debauched into a consumption of overbuying and hence of waste.

THE SUPERMARKET proprietors are not fiendish enough to have devised this foul plot against the soft under-belly of the American consumer; they just stumbled on it. It works, and it will inevitably keep on working.

The old-time shopping list is virtually extinct. If you see one in a supermarket, it is almost invariably in the hands of a man who is bucking the smooth flow of traffic because he is actually looking for a specific item he has been sent for. His wife doesn't trust him to do what she does.

A supermarket may carry 15,000 items, brands and sizes. It is estimated that 70 per cent of all sales are "impulse-buying." In consequence the woman's total purchase is so huge and heavy that most women have their own additional, personal cart to drag the monstrous orgy home.

We are told that that is the marketing for the whole week. This claim is undercut by a syndicated column, released to the papers June 13, 1958, which fairly represents the American housewife's opinion. It gave the maximum length of time that certain foods will keep in the refrigerator (not the deep-freeze) as follows: 1-2 days — chopped meat, fresh sea food, poultry; 4-5 days — fresh meat, cooked sea food, milk, cream, soft cheese; a week — fruit and vegetables. According to this table, much of the food has to be consumed, or thrown out, well before the end of the week. And these figures are about the same used in America before there was universal refrigeration. Remembering the old winter-long apple barrel, one must smile at that week for fruit. The modern system certainly produces Lucullan garbage cans.

Furthermore, this bounty is not cheap. For California lettuce, it was testified, the farmer got 5 cents, transport to New York City cost 9 cents more, and the final 15 cents, making 29 cents, was added in New York. Other figures, if you'd like two sets, have the farmer getting $403.17 for a market basket costing the consumer $997.21. "Distribution" used to mean primarily the salesperson, but at the supermarket there is no salesperson. The labor is out of sight of the customer.

THIS FORMIDABLE institution, which began to spread only in 1932, may easily prove to be America's most universal and powerful export. How the various peoples adapt it to their own *mores* will be a fascinating story in a few years.

England already has 175 supermarkets (defined as having over 2,000 square feet of selling space) and is adding five a month. It had to wait until 1954, when rationing was lifted. The cooperative movement runs half of the supermarkets, chiefly in the industrial North. The private chains include Premier with sixteen and Fine-Fare with twenty-two. There, success is represented by weekly sales of 20 shillings ($2.80) per square foot of selling space (not far off the American figure of $2.74, as against the small grocer's 76 cents), and a wage cost of 4 to 5 per cent of sales against the former 7 to 8 per cent. The British supermarkets go up to 8,000 square feet, whereas the American reach 100,000 square feet.

Supermarkets have already infiltrated the continent — France, Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands and elsewhere. The largest in Europe is the Eklöh in Cologne, containing 23,000 square feet of selling space. The American firms that have the advantage in Europe are those that already have plants there: Heinz, National Biscuit, Corn Products and General Foods.

The supermarket exhibited by the U.S. Department of Commerce at the 1957 Trade Fair in Yugoslavia has been bought by the government to equip the first of sixty Yugoslav supermarkets, this one of 10,000 square feet. Israel is to get twenty, with Canadian, United States and Israeli capital. The opening of the first, in Tel Aviv, on August 28, was attended by a riot of small shopkeepers and pushcart peddlers. One could hardly imagine a more reasonable riot, or one more futile.

Supermarkets are also proliferating through Latin America and Australia.

Canada is acting as if it had invented them. In the Winnipeg area there is a price-cutting, giveaway, building war among Safeway (thirty-nine-store chain), A & P (five), Loblaw (ten to come), Dominion (six to come), Shop-Easy and 1,400 local independents, which have pooled their advertising and buying. And still other unnamed chains are itching to get into the fight.

RETURNING to the United States, the food situation is awesome and not at all what one would think, though this is another subject on which everybody is obviously an expert.

According to the statisticians, the American today buys more food than ever—$48,000,000,000 worth in 1957—and eats less than ever in his history—only 3,200 calories today as against 3,500 calories in 1909. (How the statisticians know this I cannot imagine, nor what is meant by a figure of 4.2 pounds of food a day per capita. Does this mean food bought, put on the table or ingested? I guess that it doesn't mean dehydrated food, or include the weight of the can or package. Readers might try weighing a few meals.) Well, those are the figures.

How this food is conveyed to the United States consumer is a desperate story which explains the Israeli

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

riot. In this country there are usually around 350,000 stores selling groceries (a very liquid category, so that you can change the figure any way you want). Ten per cent of them do less than $10,000 a year gross business. These are barely living, even though the proprietors eat off their own shelves at wholesale prices. Two-thirds of the food stores do $10,000 to $100,000 a year gross business. But their share of the total retail food business is less than a quarter. Still, they keep alive. Supermarkets —both chain and independent—number around 27,000 (depending on how you define them) and get most of the rest of the business. The supermarkets, including one-store, two-store and three-store independents (the chain designation starts at four stores) have clearly cornered the American food market.

The situation of the small independent retailer (not just food) has been studied very thoroughly. One set of figures shows that in 1955 the United States had 1,865,000 retail stores. But in the immediately preceding eight-year period, 991,200 had gone out of business, 1,052,000 new enterpreneurs had taken the plunge and there had been 2,067,400 transfers of ownership. Cold statistics can seldom have disclosed more heartache, insomnia, ulcers, vain hope and black anguish. The source (Victor Lebow for Babson Institute) was convinced that the American small retailer was in an "atmosphere of catastrophe . . . steadily intensifying crisis."

This statement is put into a more correct perspective by a book that should be read by anybody trying seriously to fit into our economy — *Little Business in the American Economy*, by Joseph D. Phillips (Illinois, 1958). Here, with figures generally based on 1939, it appears that the atmosphere of catastrophe is perennial in little business in America.

Of all independent small retailers in 1935-36, 91 per cent had an annual net income under $2,000! Of all business in 1941, 329,000 enterprises were born and 328,000 died. About the same numbers went in and out in 1905. In the years between, the variations were not dramatic.

The higher number of deaths occurs generally in fairly prosperous periods.

As to what is nibbling at the small grocer, a distinction must be made between chain supermarkets and independents. For some years the chains have barely increased their percentage share of total food business. But new, well-financed independents, often offering a better and more varied type of food than the chain, have increased their share of the business from 22 per cent up toward 30 per cent since 1954.

A definite division along class and intelligence lines seems to be taking place. The better class uses, with some discrimination, the independent, "luxury" supermarkets. Political liberals seem to me to carry the trend one reactionary step further and have returned to the butcher, baker and small grocer. The masses generally do their mass-shopping in a dream at the chain stores. (I use a chain store, A & P).

THIS DRAMA has a fourth character, the great nationally-advertised-brand packer. The chain stores are applying a slow squeeze on the packers, but the existence of the independents and the small grocers saves the big packers. A & P, Safeway, American Stores, Food Fair, National Tea, Giant Foods, First National Stores are themselves listed as "packers" by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, putting them under the friendly auspices of that office and releasing them from the harsh inquisition of the Federal Trade Commission. (But new legislation may modify this arrangement.) As packers, these chains compete directly with the famous packers, buy their own cattle, sheep and hogs, fatten, slaughter, pack and ship to market. A quarter of all Colorado's cattle is handled by two chain-store packing houses. The percentage of cattle going to the great markets is rapidly sinking each year.

Chain stores, as well as the regular packers, also supervise contracted farmers' operations to the end of obtaining for market mass-produced broilers and fryers to specifications; lean bacon; big, firm heads of lettuce, etc., etc. Naturally, the chains use their own brand names on their products, but they also ask the regular packer to put their brand names on part of his product.

ONE EFFECT of all this—not our subject here — is that the farmer is becoming a one-crop specialist in an assembly line, dependent on one buyer who also supplies him with all his needs and even keeps his books. Another is the heightening of the creeping war between packers and chain stores, which the government will doubtless referee. As things stand, the packer's weapon is national advertising which, he hopes, will make the consumer *demand* — yell, scream and stamp for — his product. He can also advertise in the chain store by packaging his product seductively.

The chain store is fighting on its own home grounds. It can give its own brands the best shelf position and cut prices — for example, today the large A & P instant-coffee jar is 95 cents, while Borden's equivalent is $1.05, and the A & P coffee is moving.

In reprisal, the packers may reduce their prices to the independents. They may increase advertising, especially in local papers in cooperation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the independents. They may get into the retail business themselves, at least to the extent of improving trade credit to small grocers.

If the chain stores followed the monolithic line of least resistance, they would stock nothing competitive with their own brands and cultivate the undiscriminating mass-type shopper who never knows what's going on. (On the other hand, one of the big chains — Safeway — has recently opened in Manhattan its first supermarket specifically addressed to the epicurean elite.) The packers might see an incentive to market more varieties of more highly differentiated products, aimed at the more discriminating consumer.

There is some support for the theory that the American consumer is growing a little more sophisticated. He might some day even demand food as fresh as his grandfather got. In that case, an independent supermarket could outstrip its competitors, at least in season, by contracting with a farmer thirty miles away to bring in fresh stuff every dawn. To people who have always eaten chain-store eggs, it is a shaking experience to eat an egg laid the day before. Corn and potatoes harvested the same morning would turn modern city consumers into religious fanatics. The same applies to really fresh new peas, asparagus, tomatoes and all the rest of the edible flora.

Ultimately, the supermarket is judged on food. And food, perhaps wrongly, is judged on only one quality — taste.

LURE OF THE BRINK.. *by Norman Birnbaum*

London

THE PEOPLE of North America and Western Europe are moving towards a debacle, possibly even towards a catastrophe. But are they being frog-marched, shepherded, or simply encouraged over the brink?

We value an informed and active citizenry, but Western democracy's critics frequently argue that public opinion in the NATO countries is manipulated. The Communist states simulate consensus with familiar, battered stage-sets—petitions, resolutions, demonstrations; the control of Western opinion, we are told, is no less effective for being more subtle. The truth is that Western public opinion is both spontaneous and controlled. The Western peoples want peace and are nonetheless prepared to risk atomic war. They alternate between passive resignation, resentful withdrawal and an aggressive bellicosity. These are today's political paradoxes.

The response of the American people to the Quemoy crisis at first seemed abysmally passive. Ordinary folk hardly bothered to look. When they did, they sometimes denied themselves the normal human skepticism: James Reston has quoted a young man, venturing a quarter-criticism of the Administration, who quickly added that he did not have the "information" necessary for judgment. Things changed, later; unrest in Congress and the press spread to the public. But when Stevenson and some of the experts sought to use the crisis to force a change in our entire Far Eastern policy, popular doubts stopped well short of a total rejection of the assumptions behind the wavering Eisenhower-Dulles line.

It appears that the American man in the street still thinks that a line ought to be drawn against the Communists—if not in front of Quemoy, then in front of Formosa. Eisenhower can rightly claim that his insistence on drawing a line does have popular assent. The argument over Quemoy is mainly one over means, not ends—and the popular distaste for a hot war is far from a popular demand for a systematic policy to end the cold one.

There are, of course, differences within the Western bloc and unrest within several countries. But the Western leaders have a loose mandate from their peoples to repel what has been successfully depicted as a direct threat to their existence. They do not question the reality of the threat: why should they criticize all the measures taken to meet it? Even the evasions and half-measures by which the Western powers have maneuvered themselves out of the obligation to stop nuclear-weapons tests have gone largely unchallenged, indeed almost unnoticed, by the public. The activists have protested, of course; the millions have not responded.

Western governments, it is true, have resorted increasingly to lies: recall Mr. Macmillan's convenient discovery of "the plot to kill King Hussein" after a parliamentary debate on the Mideast crisis. Eisenhower claims that Dulles' policies will cost money, not blood. All the NATO governments speak peace, while preparing for war. But we ought not to suppose the Western peoples are so much putty in their rulers' hands. A crude and conspiratorial theory of history can be left to those who see in every problem the work of those secular substitutes for the devil, the Communists. Our rulers are not entirely without political talent, and their talent consists of an instinct for the sore points in the human raw materials before them.

Passivity, then, is a superficial diagnosis of the condition of Western opinion. Sometimes, as in the case of mass support for the British Suez adventure, opinion turns active. Eisenhower's popularity increased after the dispatch of troops to Lebanon; millions of Frenchmen supported the savage conduct of the war in Algeria. The difficulty is with the larger conditions under which opinion is formed—the bewildering complexity and machine-like functioning of modern society. These are

NORMAN BIRNBAUM, an American now teaching sociology at the London School of Economics, has contributed to scholarly and general journals in Europe and the U.S.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the forces which shape the political views of average men and women, and which explain why the Western peoples shrink back, horrified, from the brink of every abyss they reach —but have as yet to insist on a politics designed to avoid the brinks.

THE WESTERN peoples do not want a major war, but they may be led into one by their ideological commitments. The American people are more belligerent, *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union, than the Europeans, who reserve their belligerency for the colonial peoples. This is a legacy to Mr. Dulles from the late Senator McCarthy, who contributed immensely to the development of a public image of a Communist menace internal as well as external, extending from Moscow to the local reservoirs (fluorinated by subversive scientists). This image of the Soviet Union does not depict it as a foreign power in imperialist rivalry with the United States, but rather as a threat to the very pattern of ordinary American lives. This fusion of dangers internal and external is exactly characteristic of the ideology of neo-imperialism: the British and French publics support colonial wars not alone to retain the privileges of imperialism, but to stop the rot in the fabric of the state.

The gutter press in Great Britain and the respectable *Times* both attribute to President Nasser intentions far worse than twisting the tail of the British lion: they suspect he wants to slay the beast. The French have responded to the claims of the Algiers *putsch*: that national existence itself demanded the repression of the (Moslem) national liberation movement. We sometimes forget that America's relationship to Nationalist China was not unlike imperialist tutelage: the refusal to recognize the People's Republic reproduces the British resentment at Nasser's rejection of the role of Western stooge.

What we face is not nationalist bellicosity, old style; it is a curiously new national obsession. The French and British peoples are aware that their countries have been degraded to second-class status; the Americans dislike sharing world power with the USSR. These facts of international life have merged, in popular consciousness, with anxieties peculiar to the internal development of the Western societies. The Western peoples, far from thinking rationally and critically about politics as a whole, manifest a profound ideological rigidity. They have attached themselves compulsively to the symbols of national unity, despite the palpable evidence of social division. The cult of the monarchy in Britain, the resurgence of French chauvinism, the pursuit of loyalty in the United States — each constitutes a dubious therapy for the relief of social tensions. The discontinuity between a foreign environment out of control and an internal one no longer in accord with received stereotypes has been overcome — by identification with a pseudo-community. (I take this term from Robert Merton, whose earlier writings are of great value to the student of contemporary politics.)

THE identification is both forced and troubled. Those who make it do not dissent lightly; they are quick to accuse the opposition of non-national behavior. The terms are varied: "subversive" in the United States, "unpatriotic" in Britain, *"apatride"* in France. The meaning is the same: those who suggest new policies, or who display something less than enthusiasm for the most vulgar of national political stereotypes, are not just different; they are treacherous. Slogans like "twenty years of treason" are indispensable to politics in the Western countries: if the Communists did not exist, they would have to be invented.

As authentic community in Western society has eroded, the new nationalism has replaced it. The members of Western society are imprisoned in bureaucratic structures which render them, as individuals, dependent and impotent. What's the point of attending Town Meeting, even in old New England, if the critical decisions (on the fate of a local factory, on the availability of credit to local business, on the route of a new super-highway) are made elsewhere? The organizations which once defined and defended popular interests, parties, unions, trade associations, are equally bureaucratized. The daily business of politics has become, in popular perspective, another racket; and that perspective is not altogether false. The French Socialist Party used its post-war predominance to colonize the nationalized industries; the militant British Laborites of the thirties worry about the Royal Honors Lists in the fifties; the American parties in and out of office exchange roles (and invective) with oiled ease.

It has been impossible to interest, let alone mobilize, large numbers for general political programs. The Communist Parties in France and Italy have had considerable successes on concrete economic issues. But their peace campaigns, which should have had the most widespread appeal, failed. (The Communists, of course, are also bureaucratized: during the French crisis, local union secretaries in the Communist-led C.G.T. restrained the workers pending the arrival of directives from headquarters and so contributed to the general *malaise* of the Republican forces.) Moreover, the Communists' insistence that they alone represent the social revolutionary tradition in Europe has strengthened the primitive fears of those who interpret any change as a threat to their place (however pitiable) in society. So deep are these primitivist responses, indeed, that European Social Democracy has virtually repressed its reformist impulses — lest it, too, be damned as "non-national."

MEANWHILE, there are the particular problems of that post-war prosperity which has been given the peoples of North America and Western Europe. The mass media have taught millions to consume; they consume hurriedly and frantically, as if sensing that a prosperity given to them can also be taken away. As a result, their lives have become increasingly "privatized." The private life is the one sphere average individuals think they can master. The control, even the understanding, of larger social processes strikes them as beyond their powers. They suspect, not without reason, that the elites ostensibly in command of events are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in no better fix. And so, for most of the time, they refuse politics. And when they think about it at all, they rely on received stereotypes or on inane notions derived from customary experience. (A *Manchester Guardian* reporter who interviewed Lancashire workers on the Suez crisis, found that all his questions on the complexity of the issue were dismissed with the words: "What's ourn is ourn.")

Some political thinkers have welcomed these developments as evidence for the decline of ideological frenzy and the commencement of a reasonable and pragmatic era in the public life. But the retreat to the private sphere is in itself ideological; it expresses the mass conviction that society can't be changed. Worse yet, it leads to the mass conviction that society *must not* be changed. Deprived of any real sense of community, millions seek compensation in political fantasy. Tyrannized by organizational demands, uncertain of their status, missing both a sense of participation and a sense of autonomy, millions make of their private lives fortified bases from which they sometimes emerge, furious, to do battle with imaginary enemies. Unable to enjoy life with their fellows, they are prepared to die for a spurious image of their nation. The Western peoples' occasional enthusiasm for military and political adventures is the necessary complement to their pervasive political passivity.

NOTHING is more sobering to the liberal critic of Western democracy than a glance at the new democratic states of Africa and Asia. Whatever else they may be, liberal they are not. Their public and parliamentary life is unstable, indeed often violent. Yet it is the Indians and Ghanese, rather than the Americans, French or English, who seem to give effect to the notion of popular rights. The Afro-Asian peoples have as yet to conquer nature, yet they believe they can alter society. They are seemingly remote from the larger issues of world politics, but their political restiveness is such that their leaders can intervene in both Moscow and Washington in their names. What accounts for this phenomenon?

The successful struggles of the Africans and Asians for national liberation have given them self-confidence, a sense of coordinated and purposeful action on a national scale. The struggle has, of course, produced demagogues like Nkrumah, but by flattering the masses these have (at times unwittingly) contributed to their political education. Afro-Asian politicians have not quite yet devised political mechanisms for blunting the sharp edge of popular concern. It was once said that these relatively immobile social structures, with tested modes of curbing social discontent, would nullify the parliamentary institutions imposed on them. In fact, the accumulated explosive force of social discontent has infused the institutions with life.

Their national struggles were often, in any case, joined to social ones. Independence removed the foreign forces constricting domestic social conflicts. Independence had been attained; social and economic deprivation continued. The discrepancy produced not apathy but violence. Want in these countries is naked; it bites into the flesh, like hunger, and makes half-measures seem futile. And, where nearly all are impoverished, subtle differentiations easing the conflict between the classes (and isolating from one another the extremes) are impossible.

It is, in fact, the visibility of politics in the Afro-Asian countries that contrasts with the smog-like atmosphere of our own. The Asian agricultural village appears to be an unlikely place for the development of an educated citizenry. But in the villages, social relations are there to be seen. Who is richer, who is more powerful, who is unjustly treated: all is public. During the first Indian general election, a Western correspondent asked a villager if he knew what it was all about. "It is," said the latter, "the election of a national *panchayat*." The *panchayat* is the traditional democratically elected governing council of Indian villages: the analogy was simple, direct and not untrue.

MOST OF ALL perhaps, the peoples of Africa and Asia have something to live for — as peoples. Their past, despite its religious consolations and sensual satisfactions, was black. Today, with all in flux, they sense that a gigantic collective effort may lighten the future. Deplorably, but inevitably, they are attracted by Leninism-Stalinism as a path to rapid industrialization. The liberal democratic values can hardly exercise a counter-attraction, since they are not entirely visible in the societies which boast so loudly of their possession.

The Western populations are, no doubt, discontented with their own lives. But they lack effective ways of expressing that discontent — and it feeds the demons they substitute for political beliefs. Fixated on the appearance of things present, they are prisoners of the past and unable to make the future. This suits the elites ruling Western society very well. The Stalinists fear the consequences of even intra-party democracy, let alone of intellectual freedom and genuine socialist experiments like workers' councils. Khrushchev's Western counterparts are more fortunate: the structure of their society places in their hands a pliant population. But the popular alternation between withdrawal and frenzy is potentially disastrous. Either way, it gives freedom of maneuver to those who purposefully court war. We have to face the terrible fact that many of our fellow men may prefer catastrophe to that painful reconstruction in our society which alone can avert it.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS and the ARTS

Modern Criticism in America

Irving Howe

THE beginnings of a distinctly "modern" criticism in America can be dated with fair precision: 1915, the year Van Wyck Brooks published *America's Coming-of-Age*. During and after the Second World War Brooks was to abandon most of his youthful beliefs and to lapse into a rosy, soft-spirited outlook upon life and literature; but the early Brooks, though not himself contributing very much to the small stock of distinguished criticism written by Americans, led the way toward arousing a desire and creating some of the conditions for a serious criticism.

Brooks lashed out against the "genteel tradition," that cluster of decayed inhibitions and pieties which seemed to him responsible for so much of the evasiveness and deceit in American culture. He poured forth his contempt upon American commercialism and materialism, not merely because they were so dreary in their own right but because he saw them as a cause of the collapse that so frequently broke the careers of promising American writers. Like Emerson before him, Brooks worried the problem of what it meant to be an American, and not merely as being an American was a social fact but also as it was a spiritual possibility. He provided his followers with a rough yet ready criterion for evaluating both experience and literature — the criterion of "reality"—which soon came to signify an eagerness to break past the bland surfaces of American life and to discover the animating values of the American tradition as these have been embodied in the work of our major writers.

This approach could not, by itself, provide critics with clear guidance at either the practical or the theoretical level; it gave them a cultural rhetoric but not a critical technique; it failed to indicate how, in twentieth-century America, one might go about the job of criticizing a particular novel or poem. Yet the work of Brooks and his colleagues (Randolph Bourne, Waldo Frank, Lewis Mumford) was important to American criticism, if only because it prepared the way for achievements greater than their own. Perhaps more than anyone else, they brought into being an atmosphere in which the problems of literature and criticism could be regarded as vital to the future of our civilization.

THE excitement that bubbled through the work of Brooks and his friends had a good many sources: it drew upon the insurgent spirit of early twentieth-century American radicalism, it had some connection with the gradual discovery in this country of the European *avant-garde*, and it was greatly influenced by a number of revolutionary systems of thought about man and society which had been drifting across the Atlantic. From our immediate point of view, the most important of these were Freudianism and Marxism, both of which, though never designed as methods of literary criticism, were soon appropriated by eager disciples intent upon "applying" them to literature.

While it would survive into and no doubt beyond the fifties, the psychoanalytic vogue in criticism had its most exciting and popular moment during the twenties. Most of the pioneering Freudian criticism is now likely to seem excessively crude, but at the time it had, at least, the strength that comes from unqualified commitment. Later psychoanalytic critics, more cautious and sophisticated, learned from the mistakes of such beginners as Ludwig Lewisohn and Joseph Wood Krutch — but with this qualification: the more their work approached the flexibility and sensitiveness one looks for in criticism, the more their rigid Freudianism tended to melt away and become one element among others in the usual kind of critical intelligence.

On the face of it, the discoveries of psychoanalysis should have turned out to be enormously valuable to literary criticism. Psychoanalysis insists upon the primacy, and devotes itself to the buried drama, of individual life — a major theme in modern literature. Psychoanalysis sees human personality in highly dynamic terms, with the self becoming a kind of battlefield upon which fierce struggles rage between impulse and regulation, desire and convention — a vision surely close to the scrutiny of inner motives that is so frequent in nineteenth- and twentieth-century writing. Psychoanalysis seeks to break past the façade of personality and discover the implicit motifs of behavior—an impulse closely related to a dominant concern of modern literature: the search for realities of the self behind social masks. And in its stress upon the unavoidable pains and costs of repression, psychoanalysis offers a somber view of human destiny, one that in grandeur and depth approaches the "tragic sense" which has been so recurrent a topic in modern criticism.

Yet these contributions to criticism have thus far proved mainly theoretic, a promise unfulfilled. Psychoanalysis is devoted to an investigation of the individual's inner life,

---

IRVING HOWE has written critical studies of Sherwood Anderson and William Faulkner, a history of the United Automobile Workers and most recently (with Lewis Coser) The American Communist Party. *He is on the English faculty of Brandeis University and is an editor of* Dissent.

This essay is excerpted and condensed from the introduction to Modern Literary Criticism, *an anthology edited by Mr. Howe and to be published by Beacon Press in January.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but as long as we employ it primarily upon the conceptual level and are not closely involved in a clinical situation, the individual postulated by the Freudians must necessarily remain abstract. Few critics, when turning to particular poems or novels, have been able, so to speak, to individualize the Freudian image of the individual, to melt the Freudian concepts into a vital apprehension of specific character or event.

The tendency of Freudian criticism must therefore be to treat the poem or novel as if it were a case study — at best, a marvelously rich case study — without the experience of analysis behind it; that is, as a report for which the analyst had no enriching and complicating history of struggle and affection with the patient. And this, I think, must be as unsatisfactory in regard to literature as it would be in therapy.

Even in such relatively careful studies as Ernest Jones's essay on Hamlet or Ernest Kris's on Prince Hal, psychoanalytic criticism frequently courts the danger of becoming a mere sequence of predictable correlations, a sectarian allegory in which the events and figures of the plays are "translated" into the fixed categories of a system. The Freudian constants, which in a well-conducted analysis quickly lead to and become interwoven with the materials of a particular human history, usually remain frozen when applied to a work of literature. And the main reason for this, I think, is that the characters of a novel or a play cannot "talk back" or engage in free association or modify previous revelations, as a patient in therapy can. The Freudian critic is therefore inclined to concentrate upon recurrent human types rather than individual representations as they appear in novels or plays. But at its best criticism must soon go beyond the notation of archetypes and seek to discover why certain embodiments of them are so much more valuable than others, why, for example, Hamlet is so much more engaging than any number of other figures in literature with whom he shares the Oedipus complex.

The Change

The change is too complete.
These brute seasons and the sea-
bunched distance have impeded
flight, song tawny-throated

strong, or so it seemed,
enough to outwit any change
of flesh or tongue or continent.
The nightingale—how range

its wings, in thrashing
tossed, a stormy sea, its notes
a scream, to such outlandish
names and sights—is lost.

The grief, once thought
too long for time, nestling
in its flights in whatever mind
could relish it, now founders

in this water, on these
shores, in grief new, strange,
unfathomable. The change is too
complete; our story weaves,

incessant, manufactured
roar, into a ragged vacancy.
The winds we hear, this harvest
moon, finding us in the tide,

unplumbed and chartless,
of our babbling air, amazed
by what its gaze unfolds, these
cannot help. And we are dumb

unless in time the bird,
shot from this soil, caught
in our blood, our troubled will,
renew the fable of our loss.

T. Weiss

THOUGH a small part of the social, or sociological, criticism that flourished in the thirties was considerably better than most Freudian criticism, the great bulk of it was probably worse. A small part was better because the social approach, if used with restraint, lent itself to a more fruitful and intimate relationship with certain literary texts than did psychoanalytic criticism. The great bulk was worse because in the thirties social criticism usually degenerated into the kind of "Marxist" apologetics that served primarily to advance the Communist movement. Even the most rigid Freudian was usually his own man, and when he did mangle a poem or novel it was the result of disinterested zeal.

Like almost any other significant trend in modern thought, Marxism could prove useful to a literary critic, particularly if he regarded his commitment with a certain skepticism or at least reserve, and if he were not so innocent as to suppose that Marxism could by itself constitute a critical method. The power of Marxism as an analytical instrument for a critic dealing, say, with the nineteenth-century novel could be enormous — indeed, the trouble was likely to be that the tool was too powerful for the critic to control. And if he wrote as a friend of the Communist movement, his work was likely to be crippled by an inquisitorial narrowness of spirit and a form of intellectual presumption that has been described as taking upon oneself "the conceit of history."

Yet it is also important to remember that there were some critics, men free of organizational control and devoted to their craft, who wrote from a conviction that Marxism — or some social perspective in which it played a part—could help us to apprehend both large-scale trends of literary history and certain individual works. Most notable among such critics was Edmund Wilson, but there were others, such as Newton Arvin, Philip Rahv, F. O. Matthiessen, and Harold Rosenberg, who occasionally used Marxist categories with restraint and intelligence.

Many claims have been made for a sociological approach to literature, and these claims do not necessarily depend upon an acceptance of Marxism. The social approach (for our purposes often the same as what is called the historical approach) can show how apparently autonomous developments in literary history have been shaped by the pressure of historical events, e.g., how the rise of both the periodical essay and the novel in eighteenth-century England depends on the growth of new reading publics. The social approach can help us to grasp the world-outlook, or, as critics now like to say, the vision of a writer, by analyzing the component parts of his belief and thought. This approach can also help us locate the social coordinates of a work of literature, those references and implications that help bind it together and must be understood if the work is not to seem inaccessible.

Some of these claims have an obvious plausibility. Since literature exists within history yet has a history of its own, there is likely to be some value in serious efforts to account

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for changes in the content, themes, and perhaps even forms of literature by correlating them with events coextensive in time. For the criticism of such genres as the novel, and particularly such sub-genres as the realistic novel, the social approach can be very fruitful—it is often employed even by those critics who scorn it in principle. Can one really appreciate decisive parts of *Bleak House* without a knowledge of early nineteenth-century English life or, at the very least, an awareness of what the Industrial Revolution meant for the great English cities? Can one fully respond to *Middlemarch* unless one sees the way in which George Eliot has employed characteristic ideas of her time and given them imaginative embodiment in her novels? Nor is this merely—it is hardly at all—a matter of what scholars call "background material." The use of social and ideological categories is as relevant to a literary judgment of *Middlemarch* as the analysis of devices of rhetoric and patterns of form to a literary judgment of *The Waste Land*: that is, both are necessary and neither is sufficient.

Yet, all this granted, I find myself increasingly skeptical as to the uses of the social approach to literature—particularly if it is regarded as a self-sufficient way of reading novels or poems. The social approach may work well if we are trying to examine large curves of literary history, but it becomes stiff when we turn to specific literary problems. You can use it to explain the rise of the periodical essay in the eighteenth century, but it will not help much if you want to study the genesis and characteristics of Addison's style. It may illuminate George Eliot's mastery of the social world of *Middlemarch*, but it contributes very little toward describing a major quality of that novel: the way in which epigrammatic comment is woven into the action. The social approach helps as a preliminary in those instances where the poem or novel is concerned with large social topics, but it can seldom take us very far toward defining the particular quality of a writer or a work.

BY THE LATE thirties both psychoanalytic and social criticism had lost much of their *élan*, and many of the younger critics, indifferent to the ideological battles that both of these schools encouraged, turned for guidance to a group that has since come to be known as the New Critics.

The work of such New Critics as John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren and R. P. Blackmur extended back into the twenties, when some of them had led a group of Southern writers (the "Fugitives") who were sharply aware of their estrangement from modern life and committed somewhat quixotically to an "agrarian" politics, while others, like Blackmur, had begun to print close criticism of poetry in the literary magazine *Hound and Horn*. Their moment of decisive influence within the literary world did not really come, however, until both Freudian and Marxist criticism began to fade. To say that the prestige of the New Critics in the forties and fifties was merely a function of the collapse of their opponents would be gratuitously to disparage these gifted men. But it would also be naive to deny that their recent success has had much to do with shifts in the *Zeitgeist*, most notably with the large-scale reaction among intellectuals against psychological experimentalism, literary bohemia and social radicalism.

The roots of the New Criticism, to be sure, extended farther back. Its chroniclers have traced a number of doctrines and attitudes to Coleridge (literary psychology), Rémy de Gourmont (theories of style), Henry James (techniques of fiction), Ezra Pound (close analysis of verse) and I. A. Richards (speculations about the place of poetry in a scientific age). These and other influences deserve to be noted, but by far the most significant is that of T. S. Eliot, whom the New Critics saw as their living guide and exemplar.

Eliot's importance as a critic derived, first of all, from his achievement as a poet, since his poetic practice helped to create a view of English literature that would soon revolutionize the taste of the age. In his literary essays Eliot has been concerned to make possible and justify his own kind of poetry; and as his poetry has shifted from early evocations of the malaise of modern life to efforts in both reflective verse and poetic drama at reestablishing the Christian vision, so has his criticism shifted from early studies in the formal characteristics of individual writers to a series of attempts at using the analysis of literature for a Christian critique of our culture.

Much of the work the New Critics were to do consisted in applying—sometimes merely systematizing—the hints and notions that Eliot had advanced in his essays. Eliot was a critic with a flair for coining, borrowing and dramatizing critical catchphrases—the objective correlative, the dissociation of sensibility, the impersonality of poetry, the uses of tradition—which scholars and critics might later call into question, but which nonetheless had the immediate effect of provoking thought and speculation. He had an enviable capacity for elevating the unformed concerns of his audience into explicit issues, as in his repeated reflections upon the "problem of belief" (whether, in an age of clashing world-outlooks, a reader must share the religious or ideological convictions of a writer in order fully to enjoy his

The Clown's Report on Satyrs

On the hoof or dead, a satyr weighs
about the single same. They mingle
with goddesses and singe themselves in flame
that they ignite with steady gaze
while they recite the name of One
who in the old days
slept on Paxos' shingle,
and they are ruddy golden in the sun
and hold themselves aloof.
A satyr on the hoof is fleet.
Slaughtered, their dark red meat is strong.

RAMON GUTHRIE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work). And perhaps most important, Eliot seemed a model of serious and disinterested devotion to the criticism of literature—and in his earlier phase, to the criticism not of literature as it might affect or promote some other activity, but of literature as something to be valued and cherished in its own right.

IN recent years, as the New Critics have begun to seem a bit uneasy with their disciples, they have been inclined to deny that there ever was an identifiable tendency or a coherent body of ideas warranting the label of New Criticism. And indeed, there can be no question that differences of outlook and stress have, with the passage of time, become quite sharp among the New Critics. The severe moralistic judgments which Yvor Winters brings to bear upon a poem have little in common with John Crowe Ransom's interest in the local wit, the niceties of observation and diction, which for him constitute the "texture" of a poem. There is at least as great a distance between R. P. Blackmur's semantic dissections and Allen Tate's concern with discovering whether some large unifying mode of belief is resident in the total work of a poet. Yet it would seem reasonable to suppose that the identification of these and other critics as part of a loose tendency is not merely fortuitous and has some basis in reality. What that basis is, has been suggested by Allen Tate in his remark that the New Criticism has been distinguished by "a hostility to, or neglect of, the 'historical method.'"

In their zeal, often a fiercely defensive zeal, to proclaim and celebrate the integrity of literature, the New Critics declared that, unlike the "positivists" and "historicists," their purpose was to study poetry *as poetry* and not as a version or reflection of anything else. Literature was to be regarded as an autonomous mode of utterance, an independent category of experience. The work of literature could become accessible to *literary* description and judgment only if the critic employed terms referring to its inner characteristics. Where all "extrinsic" schools of criticism proposed some measure of "correspondence" to one or another aspect of (or idea about) human experience, the "intrinsic" approach of the New Criticism favored "coherence," the inner unity and propriety of the parts of the poem, as a basis for analysis and judgment.

Hoping to free literature from what they apparently regarded as the pressure and competition of science, the New Critics tried to establish poetry as something quite apart from any pragmatic rationale. Poetry, in Allen Tate's words, is "an independent form of knowledge, a kind of cognition equal to the knowledge of the sciences at least, perhaps superior."[1]

Very often this critical outlook involved a strong emphasis upon devices of rhetoric. The New Critics became keen at detecting the way in which a subtle qualifier might enrich a whole passage, a series of recurrent images might form a substructure of bias, an ambiguous use of key words could create a tension of discordant or incongruous materials to lend a poem its unexpected complexity. And since most critics, even those committed in principle to formal analysis, must have some hierarchy of preference guiding their choice of problems to investigate, individual New Critics were likely to stress certain elements (ambiguity, irony, paradox, tension) to the virtual exclusion of other formal properties or thematic materials. In fiction the New Critics stressed such matters as the "point of view" through which a novelist authenticates his material, the realization of themes through a coherent structure, and the metaphoric use of language even in realistic contexts.

In addition to these formal concerns, the New Critics, being men of our time and men deeply involved in the troubles of our time, shared a number of cultural attitudes which deeply affected their work, often in ways of which they were not quite aware. They were much concerned with what they regarded as the fracturing of the modern mind into utilitarian and aesthetic sectors, a fracturing that has resulted in a steady diminution of power and confidence since the time of the Renaissance; and they looked upon poetry (except when looking upon religion) as the one possibility for restoring wholeness and unity. They were concerned with the decay of tradition, both in the social and in the literary senses of the term: the decay of those inherited assumptions of value which, beneath the surface of consciousness, give order and meaning to human experience. And as a result of these preoccupations, they kept returning, often with a genuine perceptiveness, to the "problem of belief," which in the final analysis involved nothing less than whether it was still possible in our time to have a disinterested response to works of literature.

MOST traditional literary scholars have regarded the New Criticism with suspicion, in some instances out of a feeling that they were being threatened by high-powered analysts with whom they could not compete, and in other instances because they felt that the New Criticism failed adequately to consider the historical context of works of literature. If there are certain advantages in regarding a text as though it were contemporaneous and anonymous, there are very grave disadvantages as well, since language is neither static nor stable but has an inner development of its own and is subject to the shifting pressures of the whole historical process. Thus, charged the traditional literary scholars— and at times with some justice—certain of the ingenious ambiguities or paradoxes noted by the New Critics were really read into the poems, violating the limits of possibility in behalf of modernist complexities. It may be that these are incidental blemishes on the bright face of the New Criticism; but it may also be that if the New Critics heeded such cautions systematically a good part of their brilliance would be dimmed.

Some of the New Critics, especially when dealing with poetry of unusual complexity, have also been

[1]Except as indices of preference, it is difficult to make out the meaning of "equal" and "superior." For if Tate really intended to suggest that poetry and science are distinct disciplines, each with its own aims, characteristic procedures and modes of convention, then a comparison using terms like "equal" and "superior" is probably meaningless.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inclined to provide monolithic readings that stiffen the poem into a moral allegory.[2] Why this should be so I am not quite sure, but let me suggest that it may be related to the fact that the New Critics are torn in two directions: their theory requires them to be dispassionate technicians of literary analysis while their experience makes them into passionate moral philosophers. As they proliferate "levels" or ambiguities of meaning in their study of a poem, they naturally seek a counter-principle of unity, one that will bind together the disparities and incongruities they have discovered and lend some principle of order to their serried interpretations. And since they are also deeply involved in the modern quest for values, it becomes a natural temptation — one by no means confined to their school of criticism—to regard the poem as ultimately possessing the rigor, certainty and completeness of allegory.

WE have been assuming all the while that the New Critics habitually practice what they preach, but, like any other group of critics committed to a method or an approach, they have never found this entirely possible. The truth is that they have often mixed (or contaminated) close analyses of texts with oracular pronouncements of a sort that might be described as moralistic impressionism. A major charge that could be brought against a good many New Critics is not that they are limited in their approach but that they stray, often unawares, past the limits they have set for themselves.

Consider the peculiar prestige which terms like "orthodox," "tradition" and "Original Sin" enjoy among many New Critics. "Orthodox" is, properly speaking, not a literary term at all, since it pertains to matters of religious or other belief rather than to critical judgment. "Original Sin" is a category of a particular theology. The word "tradition" is somewhat more tricky, since it has legitimate uses in both literary and moral-ideological contexts. What happens, however, in much contemporary criticism—the New Critics are not the only sinners—is that these two contexts are taken to be one or to be organically related, so that it becomes possible to assume that a sense of the literary tradition necessarily involves and sanctions a "traditional" view of morality. There is a powerful inclination to forget that the literary tradition has never been a unitary one but has consisted of competing tendencies, and that it can be fruitfully regarded as a series of revolts, literary but sometimes more than merely literary, of generation against generation, one age against another. There is an equally powerful inclination among the New Critics to take for granted in their work the beneficent presence of a neo-orthodox theology and a conservative politics. Opposed though they are in principle to confusing literary and ideological categories, they have seldom troubled to examine their own work in order to inquire whether this confusion has afflicted them even as it has afflicted other mortals.

THERE is a sense in which these remarks about modern criticism have been systematically unjust—perhaps unjust to the extent that they have been systematic. For it has been necessary to discuss the various critical approaches as if they were actually as internally consistent as their defenders sometimes claim, while in the reading of criticism what matters is precisely the individual variations, the touches of private sensibility. Any critic who is more than a robot seldom stays very long within one approach. The social critics may favor some version of "correspondence" as a criterion of judgment and the formalist critics some version of "coherence"; but in practice, when confronted with the task of elucidating "Sunday Morning" or *Light in August*, no critic of any intelligence has had any choice but to bring both criteria into play.

Literary criticism at its best is a personal art in which the power of insight counts far more than allegiance to a critical theory or position. When one reads Newton Arvin on Melville, one cannot easily place his book in any of the usual categories—indeed, so fine and just a book merits an appreciation much more generous than any act of "placing" could be. When one reads the criticism of Edmund Wilson, it may be possible to notice that he was at various times influenced by Freud and Marx, but what really matters is his skill at grasping the outlines of a work, his gift for evoking its essential quality, his zest before the experience of reading. His work suggests no image of blackboard and chalk, he does not add to the dreariness of the scene by proposing still another "system" or catalogue of jargon; each of his essays is his and his alone, the revelation of a unique and cultivated sensibility.

The methods critics use must obviously affect the nature and quality of their work, but they are not finally decisive. Perhaps there has recently been too much talk about critical method—a "searching," as Gide once wrote, "for criteria without wishing to go to the trouble of acquiring taste"—and not nearly enough about critical tone and breadth and insight. The best method could not make a mediocre man into a good critic; the worst can do a sensitive critic harm but not, I think, suppress his gifts indefinitely. And no method can give the critic what he needs most: knowledge, disinterestedness, love, insight, style. "The only method," Eliot once wrote, "is to be very intelligent." He might have added that it is also the hardest method.

[2]This observation has been made to me by J. V. Cunningham, though I do not know whether he would accept the use to which I have put it.

Nocturnal Aerial Act

Deep in a stretch of silver
under the river

the bridge is in
the branches of the moon.

The wind is in the branches
of the bridge

swinging across
an arc of dark air

dangerous down there
the trees watching

caught in the branches
of the wind leaning

over steel stresses of water
about to let go.

DONALD SCHENKER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Law and Policy in the Supreme Court

MARBLE PALACE: THE SUPREME COURT IN AMERICAN LIFE. By John P. Frank. Alfred A. Knopf. 302 pp. $5.

THE SUPREME COURT FROM TAFT TO WARREN. By Alpheus Thomas Mason. Louisiana State University Press. 250 pp. $4.95.

C. Herman Pritchett

IT IS increasingly hard to remember the time when the main barrier to an understanding of the Supreme Court was a public attitude of over-veneration. For the half-century from 1885 to 1935, a property-minded, conservative Court was protected by a carefully nurtured myth that the interpretation of the Constitution was an exercise in pure reason unaffected by the personal predilections of the justices. When liberal legislation was declared unconstitutional, the public was told that it was not because the justices willed it, but because the Constitution required it.

Between 1935 and 1937 this myth was shattered as the people came to see, in Max Lerner's words, that "judicial decisions are not babies brought by constitutional storks." Since then a generally liberal Court has had to function before a public well aware that constitutional interpretation is policy formation, not legal exegesis. The sense of awe has vanished. Instead we have violent attacks on the Court as a promoter of communism; a conference of state chief justices castigates the Court for assuming legislative functions, and a journalistic busybody sends out a broadside to judges of the lower federal courts, inquiring whether they agree with the decisions of their superior tribunal. Under such conditions there is danger that the new understanding of the Court's policy role will be perverted into a denial of the legitimacy and the value of judicial participation in democratic policy formation.

These books by two of the ablest analysts of the Court will help to maintain the perspective and balance now so badly needed. Mason of Princeton is the author of magnificent biographies of Brandeis and Stone. Frank, once law clerk to Black and former Yale professor of constitutional law, adds to this background the insights of a practicing lawyer and a sparkling writing style. Frank's book is a kind of intelligent layman's guide to the Court. There are two chapters of appraisal and good stories about the justices who have served on the Court, and another on the various chief justices and the roles they have played. Frank explains how cases are argued and how the Court reaches decisions and writes opinions. He even offers a chapter on the literary character of judicial opinions, which he finds to be too often non-existent. The only part of the book which does not succeed is the five chapters in which the author undertakes the impossible task of covering in a few pages the substance of the Court's position on civil liberties and other major issues in constitutional law.

MASON's book is a somewhat academic and chronological account of the Court's approach to its policy responsibilities since 1921 when Taft became chief justice. Under Taft, the Court demonstrated what a real "super-legislature" is like, striking down legislation in a "carnival of unconstitutionality." The conflict on that Court is presented, not as between conservatives and liberals but as between justices who believed there were certain rights beyond the reach of legislative experimentation and other justices who held that experimentation was essential to a changing society.

Mason denies Hughes the kudos he usually has received for his statesmanship. "An inclination to resist irresistible change and then to move along with solutions one has had no conspicuous role in shaping are not the marks of statesmanship. At the expense of both the form and substance of the law, he seemed unduly interested in preserving the Court's symbolic function."

Under Hughes the Court retreated from the super-legislative function espoused by Taft; under Stone it was forced to become "a court in search of its role." Mason is an avowed partisan of Stone, whom he regards as "one of the great creative judges of our time." Admitting that Stone was not much of a success as chief justice, he suggests that this failure was in part the result of his virtues—Stone refused to use "the high-pressure tactics of Taft and Hughes," nor would he employ "ingenious reasoning, good fellowship, the caucus" to keep the Court united.

Mason all but ignores Vinson, the index listing only three references to him. He sees the movement of the more recent Court as toward "positive responsibility." Judicial self-restraint, which has been a consistent refrain of Justice Frankfurter, and which the state supreme court justices urge on the Court in their manifesto, is by no means the essence of judicial responsibility. When political rights are denied by legislative action, it makes no sense to say that the only remedy lies with the legislature. "The real problem is to protect individuals and minorities without thereby destroying capacity in the majority to govern." This is the tremendous responsibility which the Warren Court has courageously assumed.

C. HERMAN PRITCHETT has written The Roosevelt Court, Civil Liberties and the Vinson Court *and* The Political Offender and the Warren Court.

Second Impressions

Reviewing the Paperbacks

Robert M. Wallace

Science and Philosophy

FOUR SCIENTISTS, yielding to the urge to philosophize, meditate in new reprints about the nature and validity of scientific knowledge, speculate about the characteristics of ultimate reality, or examine man's peculiar status in the sort of universe depicted by prevailing scientific theories.

An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine by Claude Bernard (Dover, $1.50) was first published nearly a century ago, but its account of the essential features of scientific research is almost as useful today as it was originally for students of science and philosophy of science. A new foreword by I. Bernard Cohen reviews Bernard's scientific achievements and explains his philosophical outlook.

Science Theory and Man, formerly *Science and the Human Temperament,* by Erwin Schrödinger (Dover, $1.35), carries an essay on elementary particles in the new edition. The eminent physicist presents his views on the philosophical implications of Heisenberg's indeterminacy principle, discusses the philosophical value of the sort of conceptual models used in modern physics, and analyzes the concept of "law of nature." One particularly interesting essay argues convincingly that science (i.e., *Wissenschaft)* is really a kind of intellectual play or artistic activity.

In *The Philosophy of Physical Science* (Michigan-Ann Arbor Paperbacks, $1.75) Sir Arthur Eddington offers what he ambitiously describes as "the philosophy to which those who follow the accepted practice of science stand committed by their *practice.*" Eddington acknowledges that he submits a personal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

philosophy of science. Indeed, he stands almost alone in declaring that fundamental laws of physics are *a priori* rather than empirical principles.

Sir James Jeans surveys a borderland territory in his *Physics and Philosophy* (Michigan-Ann Arbor Paperbacks, $1.75). He reflects on his theory of knowledge, free-will problems, philosophical implications of the new physics. He argues that we are not yet in a position to announce either the death of materialism or the obsolescence of metaphysical determination. He reaffirms his belief that modern physics has moved in the direction of mentalism and reiterates his conviction that in so doing it has moved nearer truth than fiction. Like Eddington on somewhat similar points, Jeans is less convincing than provocative.

(James W. Clark, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Alabama, kindly provided the four notices above.)

The Function of Reason by Alfred North Whitehead (Beacon, $1.25), assuming that the function is "to promote the art of life," considers reason relative to the decay of physical nature and the renewals within biological evolution.

An Introduction to Mathematics by Alfred North Whitehead (Oxford-Galaxy, $1.50) protested in 1911 against absorption in detail and a resultant neglect of principles and underlying purposes. It is still *avant-garde*, a lucid, comprehensible foundation for newly-designed introductions to mathematics.

Literary History

Contrasting procedures in literary history appear in the new releases. *The Allegory of Love* by C. S. Lewis (Oxford-Galaxy, $2.25) is now a classic analysis of a convention, with a history of its development in literature. Chaucer, Gower and Spenser are the chief writers dealt with, and through the convention Mr. Lewis illuminates both the men and the times.

The Novel in France by Martin Turnell (Vintage, $1.25) treats only seven novelists, Mme. de La Fayette through Proust, and is hence no regular history. Mr. Turnell's tastes are classical and he is perhaps most perceptive about Mme. de La Fayette, Laclos, Constant and Stendhal—the last of whom suffered an "unfortunate influence of Romanticism" but was preserved by psychological penetration and the involvement in life characteristic of the classicists. Balzac he considers sentimental, extravagant and stylistically insensitive; Flaubert failed to define his central characters and overloaded his symbols; Proust for all his oddities and involutions is greater than either. Mr. Turnell's study is stylistic, historical, psychological and finally critical. It continues to win admirers despite translations which are surprisingly inadequate in a book on style; but he gives French and English and writes with the French always in mind.

A History of Russian Literature from Its Beginnings to 1900 by D. S. Mirsky (Vintage, $1.25) is Francis J. Whitefield's respected edition. Most of its nearly 400 pages treat the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with a surprising absence of bias. Mirsky's history is standard and full in detail. Good index.

Miscellaneous

Eimi by E. E. Cummings (Evergreen, $2.45), an individualistic poet's account of a month's trip to Russia in 1931, describes a Communist world of detectives, technicians, tipsters and harum-scarums which appears somewhat madder than our own—or Mr. Cummings'.

The Double by Fyodor M. Dostoyevsky (Indiana-Midland, $1.50; cloth, $3.75), though it lags and misfires at times, is at others a brilliant first venture into the theme of split personality which is near the center of his great work two decades later.

It's News Half-Way Around the World!

(Sydney, Australia)
DAILY TELEGRAPH, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1958

by ROBERT FELDMAN

J. Edgar is the sacred cow, above criticism and budget cuts His G-men are efficient, incorruptible, infallible and modest

They are the stalwart protectors of America against spies, saboteurs and subversives. And they never, never play dirty.

Now comes a document that makes the Bureau look very sick—and possibly even dangerous. It is a 60-page expose in the respected liberal magazine, *The Nation*, written by Fred J. Cook, crack police reporter

Yet the F.B.I. is largely immune from criticism in the U.S. Press and in Congress.

A nationwide blackout in the newspapers on the *Nation* article virtually ensures that it will remain so.

For copies of Mr. Cook's article, which has provoked interest in many capitals of the world, fill out and mail the coupon below. You save 50% and more buying in bulk — and you can present copies to your friends or to your organization.

THE NATION, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, N.Y.

Please send me copies of the special issue devoted to Fred J. Cook's article, "The FBI," as indicated below:

☐ 10 copies for $2.50
☐ 50 copies for $10.00
☐ 100 copies for $17.00
☐ 500 copies for $75.00
☐ 1,000 copies for $125.00
☐ 1,000-plus (ask for quotation)

NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY ..... ZONE ..... STATE .....

11-22-58

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain (Riverside Editions, 80c) reprints the authoritative first edition, with appended facsimiles of manuscript and printed text and a careful, fresh introduction (typical of the series) by Henry Nash Smith.

The Genius of American Politics by Daniel J. Boorstin (Chicago-Phoenix, $1.35), profoundly suspicious of dogma, examines American substitutes for political theory and argues that the doctrine of "givenness" in varied forms and times, coupled with the uniqueness of our circumstances, has favored a domestic conservatism and in effect prevented export of our patterns. The Walgreen lectures of 1952, with needed suggestions for further reading.

The American Woman by Eric John Dingwall (Signet, 50c) wittily presents a mass of evidence that she is obsessed with sex though heir of the Puritans, and frustrated though domineering.

Language for Everybody by Mario Pei (Pocket Books, 50c) popularizes a big subject in a small book.

The Oldest Stories in the World, originally translated and retold by Theodore H. Gaster (Beacon, $1.95), contains thirteen Babylonian, Hittite and Canaanite stories with an introduction and extensive comments relating them to other folklore.

AT YOUR DRUGGIST'S: *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser (Bantam, 50c); *The Wapshot Chronicle* by John Cheever (Bantam, 50c); *My Brother's Bride* by William March (Pyramid, 50c); *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens, introduction by Joseph Mersand (Pocket Library, 75c); *Bell, Book and Candle* by John van Druten (Bantam, 50c); *Three Great Plays* of Euripides, Rex Warner, translator (Mentor, 75c), containing *Medea, Hippolytus* and *Helen*; *Hannibal* by Mary Dolan (Avon, 35c).

LETTER from ROME

Alexander Werth

"THE English Poet John Keats died in this house. . ." In October, Rome is particularly beautiful. The orange, ochre, apricot and salmon-pink stucco of the buildings in the Piazza di Spagna looks so much more delicate than it does in the glaring sunshine of July. On the large staircase alongside the house where Keats died, young people, mostly Americans, sit for hours, absorbing the atmosphere of Rome. It is tempting to relax in Rome, to enjoy its beauty, its spaghetti and chianti, and forget about H-bombs, even about the miseries of the Italian poor. The poor aren't all that obvious in Rome itself, but I traveled out to some of the *borgate*—the tin-shack settlements only a few miles outside the city—and the poverty there is worse and more sordid than you see even in Sica's and Fellini's films; families of nine or ten in one room; undernourishment; no hygiene; unemployment with practically no help from anywhere.

In Italy they don't much care for Sica's and Fellini's films. Even Italian intellectuals say they dislike being constantly reminded of *that* side of Italy; the stuff gives them a bad conscience. It also gives the outside world the wrong idea of Italy. They tell you that Italy remains two distinct countries: the North, where the standard of living is comparable to France, and the South, where it's comparable to North Africa. In Rome, just on the borderline between the two, abject poverty is represented chiefly by the constant influx of "immigrants" from the South. At the same time, houses are being built all over the place, with rents accessible to middle-class and upper-working-class incomes. Italian cities (and Rome in particular) are among the few cities in Europe where, except for the very poor, there is no longer a housing shortage.

THERE is a marked *embourgeoisement* among the working class, and the labor unions are up against a terrifying problem: high wages in certain industries. Fiat and Olivetti, for example, pay *three* times as much as the labor unions demand. The unions, not unnaturally, complain of the "loss of class solidarity"; what a worker in Turin wants is not a "union wage," but a job with Fiat, complete with house and garden. So the masses in Italy tend to belong to two extremes: the "Americanized" working-class aristocracy which is becoming increasingly apolitical; and the down-and-outs who are anarchist, rather than Marxist. The apolitical working class is a phenomenon common to most countries of Western Europe today. The Italian peculiarity is the existence of a relatively large down-and-out group—and the fact that it is anarchist, rather than revolutionary-Marxist.

A tough-minded program for idealists —

WITH A PROMISE . . .
. . . of a world without fear of atomic holocaust

WITH A PLAN . . .
. . . for total disarmament within the framework of the United Nations, meshed with the step-by-step growth of a U. N. collective security force

WITH PERSPECTIVE . . .
. . . that exposes the flaws in our present disarmament policy, and compels a careful re-evaluation of the entire problem of collective security

"Required reading for every thoughtful student of this basic problem of mankind."—LOUIS B. SOHN, *Professor of International Law, Harvard*

Permanent Peace

A CHECK AND BALANCE PLAN
By TOM SLICK

Don't miss this vital book that tells what *you* can do to help put this plan into effect at your bookseller or mail your check or money order for $2.95 directly to **PRENTICE-HALL,** Dept. PP-3, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y.

If it's bound in paper, we're bound to have it!
The Paperback Bookseller
147 Front Street
Hempstead, N. Y.
Order from us now—we pay postage.

ATLASES
GLOBES and MAPS
Make excellent gifts
Write for circular G30N
DENOYER-GEPPERT COMPANY
5235 Ravenswood Ave., Chicago 40, Ill.

Critical Quackery
Why Critics are Guilty of It, And How to See Through It
by Theodore L. Shaw
Author of PRECIOUS RUBBISH
Learn to detect the frauds by which fast-talkers have corrupted an honorable profession. Witty, informing, 184 pages, hard cover. $1.00 at your bookstore, or on approval direct from publisher, Stuart Art Gallery Inc., 719 Boylston St., Boston, Mass. Room 302.

BUY YOUR BOOKS THROUGH THE NATION

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

No doubt, the "poor" in Italy continue to vote for the Nenni Socialists and for the Communists. There are still 140 Communist members in the Chamber of Deputies, and eighty-four Nenniites, as against 275 Christian-Democrats. But the most common complaint I heard from both Nenniites and Communists was that their parties had "lost contact with the masses." The Christian-Democrats still kept in touch with the people through the priest, but the left-wing parties had no such agent. Nor did the masses read the party newspapers; in a great industrial city like Turin only a few thousand copies of the Communist *Unità* or the Nenniite *Avanti* were sold. Radio and TV were entirely in the hands of the government.

I had long talks about this with Pietro Nenni; he took a gloomy view of the future of Italy and the future of Europe. Both, he thought, were going "reactionary," and Gaullism in France, for all its apparent benevolence and liberalism, merely showed the way all Europe was going. There was not much genuine socialism, or genuine revolutionary fervor, in the young generation. His Socialist Party is now in a constant state of crisis. Nenni, once a faithful ally of the Italian Communists, broke with them after Budapest. He thought there wasn't "a hope in hell" for a Popular Front in Italy now, and was impatient with Socialists who still hankered for their old alliance. There would have to be a showdown at the Naples congress in January, even if it meant a final split in the party. His line was that the real tragedy of the Left in Europe was that "you couldn't have a strong Left either *with* the Communists or *without* the Communists."

WHOSE fault was this decay of a "Left *mystique*" in Europe? I put the question to one of the most interesting characters in the Italian political scene: Antonio Giolitti, grandson of *the* Giolitti and so, obviously, a man with a *grand-bourgeois*, Piedmontese background. Antonio, now 43, had taken up an active fight against fascism in the days of Mussolini; then became a hero of the Resistance during the war when he fought on the side of the Partisans in the Italian Alps. He respected the Italian Communists who, he said, had a "pure record," unsullied by the Soviet-German pact which the French Communists had approved. At the end of the war he became a deputy and one of the leading figures of the Italian Communist Party. No doubt, Giolitti said, he (and others) had had qualms about the Communist Party: it seemed too closely tied to Moscow. In the post-war years they swallowed a lot of things they didn't like—the Rajk trial, the Slansky trial, the breach with Tito. And yet, he said, by and large, they still felt that Russia stood for the "right things," and that it was impossible to be squeamish at the height of the Cold War. The breaking-point came with the XXth Party Congress and events in Eastern Europe thereafter. Togliatti felt Khrushchev was reasoning along the right lines; in Italy, the Communists started talking in terms of "the Italian way to socialism." The XXth Congress, in short, raised hopes, which Budapest then destroyed.

Giolitti and many other intellectuals left the Communist Party—they had lost faith in the Soviet Union. "Why," I asked, "did you have faith in it in the days of Stalin?" "It was different then: we needed Russia, and Russia needed us; neither we nor Russia wanted war. Now Russia has the H-bomb, and this H-bomb has somehow taken the place of the ideological prestige Russia once had. Since the effect of the XXth Congress was destroyed by Budapest, Russia has come to mean less and less to the Italian working class. Nor does Russia, armed with H-bombs, need us. . . ."

The confusion on the Left in Italy becomes the greater when one considers that Nenni's critics accuse him of "wanting to be a cabinet minister again," and of being willing to cooperate with the left-wing of the Christian-Democrats. These alleged tendencies on Nenni's part are chiefly attributed to the influence of President Gronchi who, scared of an all-out right-wing offensive—in Italy, as elsewhere in Europe—finds the last hope for Italian democracy in an alliance between the Christian Democrats and the Nenni Socialists.

So nothing on the Italian Left is clear-cut: not even the position of the Communists. Influenced by Franco Rodano, head of the now defunct Left Christian Party, Togliatti himself has an ambiguous attitude to the Church. At Rodano's house he is said often to meet Cardinal Ottaviani and other cardinals. After the death of the late Pope, he wrote in *Unità* a highly favorable obituary—which is a lot more than Nenni ever did.

Western Europe is, sure enough, becoming more prosperous, but politically and mentally it is becoming increasingly stuffy. Antonio Giolitti said to me:

> In my grand-dad's days, a parliamentary speech could be a great historic event; now parliament means practically nothing in Italy. There hasn't been a single important debate since the election last May. Everything in parliament has been prefabricated by the government. And it's becoming the same in most other European countries; it is highly ominous for the whole of Europe that France should, in fact, have adopted a monarchist constitution. . . . Something new is crystallizing in Europe. It will not be called fascism, but may, in many ways, be quite as bad. And you may well have it in England, too.

THEATRE

Robert Hatch

IF THE point of your play is to be that your hero is a hollow sham, prudence suggests that you contrive to conceal it until quite far along in the proceedings. In *Epitaph for George Dillon* (John Golden Theatre), John Osborne and Anthony Creighton make Dillon's emptiness clear before he has ever set foot upon the stage and devote the rest of the evening to showing the various ways in which a vacuum is without content.

The play has a certain virtuoso appeal, for not only is Dillon without any qualities that could move you to response, but everyone around him shares in the negation, and it is surprising that a stage can be kept looking lively and varied while the actors work out permutations on the concept of zero. Perhaps the fact that the cast, led by Robert Stephens, Eileen Herlie and Alison Leggatt, is composed of resourceful actors adept at making their presence strongly felt (Stephens is a regular windmill of self-generated emotion) has something to do with it; but it is also true that Osborne showed early a brilliant understanding of stage situation.

That is a mechanical affair, though, and not to be confused with dramatic situation. Dramatically, the play defeats itself by telling you that these are negligible people, incapable of growth or change, and then proving it by permitting nothing to grow or change. The stage does not offer either enlightenment or entertainment when all that is to be discovered about the characters is evident in the immediate impression each one makes.

George Dillon, self-styled artistic failure, is patently a parasite living on the general credulity that does not look under the bushel when a petulent loafer says his light is hidden there. The Elliott family on which he feeds is patently meant to be fed on and will be no better and no worse for the experience (the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Elliotts are representatives of the middle class which the nouveau literates in England feel compelled to denounce in filial horror). The notion of a thin-skinned man doomed to live among people who say "this occasion calls for a drink" does not rouse pity if he has made no slightest attempt to escape. The maudlin deflation of Dillon in the closing scene looked, thus, like a good actor's trick of shrinking in his clothes.

A playwright cannot trot a lot of people on stage and simply say "did you ever see such a bunch of fools and phonies?" The answer is that we have seen a good many fools and phonies, that we think we are pretty good at spotting them and that it is the playwright's job to show us either that our acumen is less sharp than we had supposed or that there are curious reasons behind the distressing waste. Anyone who really believes that there is nothing to be said beyond that flat angry question has a right to his opinion, but the theatre is not his métier. He belongs in some work where people are counted, not discussed. And I am not talking about the artist's supposed obligation to society—only about his obligation to show us what he has discovered when he calls us to his booth. *Epitaph for George Dillon* is not a discovery, it is a tautology.

NEVER say that Broadway is indifferent to youth knocking at the door. Speed Lamkin, a young playwright from Louisiana by way of Harvard, and Robert Mulligan, a young director from New York by way of CBS and NBC, offer *Comes a Day* (Ambassador Theatre) as their first Broadway venture. They are sponsored by Cheryl Crawford (with Alan Pakula as co-director) who has engaged for them Judith Anderson, George C. Scott, Arthur O'Connell, Brandon de Wilde and a supporting cast of consistent excellence. Young men could scarcely ask more generosity.

Why, then, is *Comes a Day* so discouraging? It is not very good, but few first plays are—what we look for is a spark, not a flaming masterpiece. *Comes a Day* is depressing because it does not try to be good; it tries to be successful. Needing a marketable theme, Mr. Lamkin has selected, with no originality at all, the currently popular scapegoat—mother. Caroline Lawton (Diana van der Vlis) is being forced into an advantageous marriage by her mother (Miss Anderson), who expects thus to recover her fallen prestige in the town. The advantageous Tydings Glenn (Mr. Scott) does not attract the girl; also his own mother's showy promiscuity has turned him into a psychotic misogynist with homicidal overtones. Miss Anderson doubles in the role of husband castrator; having by scorn reduced her husband (Mr. O'Connell) to an apologetic drunk, she jumps up and down, as it were, on his supine body to instruct her son (Mr. de Wilde) and daughter in the niceties of wedlock. Poor old father Lawton has the last word, though; after Tydings, his mother being mentioned, stages a fit in the living room and then steps outside to break up the garden furniture (also after it is discovered that he has beheaded a pet crow under the misapprehension that it is a gift to his fiancée from a rival admirer), Lawton springs into sobriety and denounces the marriage. Mother is then suffering an unusual moment of weakness (a police ambulance has been summoned to remove her candidate) and Caroline is permitted to leave home in pursuit of the manly young plumbing salesman with whom she has been spending the odd weekend in a nearby motel.

These abstracts from some how-to-do-it handbook of abnormal psychology have been directed in a wigwagging style of acting designed to be visible on a 21-inch screen. Tydings Glenn, a masterful facade, betrays his inner rottenness by a curious tic. He is a compulsive eater of small fruit (limes, perhaps?) which he cuts in half with a clasp knife large enough to disembowel a bullock. Lawton the lush is forever entering from the bathroom (he retires to that haven when any crisis arises), wiping his mouth with a gesture furtive enough to be seen across a state armory. Caroline is given a big undress scene to signify that she is "ready." There is a bumptious friend (Charles White) whose bad taste and vulgarity are so eccentric as to carry him over to the loony side with Tydings. Only Miss Anderson and Mr. de Wilde are permitted (or determined) to behave like normal examples of the people they are said to be. Everyone else has been taught to send up smoke signals. Mr. Scott's case is particularly alarming—he is a young actor of talent with a growing reputation for a hypnotic stage presence; he can only harm himself by consenting to do imitations of a man wrestling with a high-tension wire.

It may be injustice, but I get the impression that Mr. Lamkin's play has been through one of those processing plants known as writers' workshops. It is put together with more second-hand hardware than any one young man would be likely to have handy.

MUSIC

Lester Trimble

GIAN-CARLO MENOTTI's latest opera, *Maria Golovin*, which had a successful world premiere at the Brussels Fair, opened at the Martin Beck Theatre somewhat over a week ago and closed quietly within five days. This was, to my knowledge, the most resounding popular failure that Menotti has ever suffered, and it raises all sorts of questions, especially since this work gave reason to hope that the composer was rising above an easy level of musical expression he long ago achieved and was seemingly content to duplicate. *Maria Golovin*, though a rough gem, and not a diamond at that, showed signs of a stronger musical personality than did *The Consul* or *The Saint of Bleecker Street*. Indeed, it was the first Menotti work since *The Medium* (long ago worn thin for me), which sent me from the theatre with an uncheated, even a slightly nourished

$1600 CASH Awards plus 40% royalty. All types of manuscripts invited.

Best Book Contest for 1958

For Contest rules and details of famous publishing plan, write for Brochure N.
Pageant Press, 101 Fifth Ave., N. Y. 3

Free to WRITERS seeking a book publisher

Two fact-filled, illustrated brochures tell how to publish your book, get 40% royalties, national advertising, publicity and promotion. Free editorial appraisal. Write Dept. NA-11
Exposition Press / 386 4th Ave., N.Y. 16

AUTHORS WANTED BY N. Y. PUBLISHER

New York, N. Y.—One of the nation's largest book publishers is seeking manuscripts of all types—fiction, non-fiction, poetry. Special attention to new writers. If your work is ready for publication, send for booklet No. 103—It's free. Vantage Press, Inc., 120 West 31st Street, New York 1, New York.

Buy Your Books through *The Nation*

Nation readers can avail themselves of our offer to send them any book (except paperbacks) at the regular retail price post-free if payment it received with the order, or at the retail price plus postage if the book is sent C.O.D. No C.O.D.'s outside the United States. When ordering, please give name and author and publisher, if possible. Please address your orders to: Miss O. LePach

THE READER'S SERVICE DIVISION
333 Sixth Ave. New York 14, N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RESORTS

ONLY 50 MILES FROM N.Y.C.

CELEBRATE THANKSGIVING in a warm, friendly atmosphere. Golf at a fabulous Country Club. Dancing, Entertainment, Superb cuisine. Elevator service. In N.Y.C. call at local rate:
FAirbanks 5-7227
MAhopac 8-3449

FOREST house
LAKE MAHOPAC, N. Y.

ALLABEN
Monmouth & 5 St., Lakewood, N.J.
Modern, intimate. Fabulous Classical Record Collection — Library — Entertainment — Free Ice Skating. Allaben Ensemble, Mort Freeman. Jewish American Cuisine
JACK & SERENA SCHWARTZ
Tel. Lakewood 6-1222 • Res. Thanksgiving

HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

Complete Personality Analysis from Your Handwriting
Fee $5.00
ALFRED KANFER
62 Leroy St., New York 14, N. Y.
Endorsed by scientific authorities, hospitals, insurance companies, colleges, psych journals
Recipient of research grants

RECORDINGS

SAVE ON ALL LP's
• Factory Fresh
• Including hard to get items
• Fast Service • Careful Packing
Write for free catalogue
DISCOUNT RECORD SERVICE
Box 175, Radio City Sta., N. Y. 19

SERVICES

WE MOVE YOU WITHOUT TEARS — economical, insured, household moving. Vans, station wagons. Any day, any time. The Padded Wagon, AL 5-8343 (N.Y.C.).

PERSONALS

LEARN WHILE YOU SLEEP equipment for experimenters. Full line timers, pillow speakers, endless tapes. Also books, languages, self-help personality improvement courses on record. Inquiries invited. Sleep Learning Research Association, Box 24-TN, Olympia, Washington.

STAINLESS STEEL FLATWARE. 5 pc. place setting. Regularly $5.95 — SPECIAL ONLY $2.95. Over 40 other imported and domestic patterns to choose from. Standard Brand Dist., 143 Fourth Avenue (13th & 14th Sts.), N. Y. GR 3-7819. 1 hour free parking.

Advertising Rates
CLASSIFIED
74c a line (6 words)
Three-line minimum
CLASSIFIED DISPLAY
$7.42 per inch (minimum)
The NATION
333 Sixth Ave., New York 14, N.Y.
CHelsea 2-8400

feeling. That feeling has persisted, and since it is my conviction that a work is as much to be judged by its afterglow as by its immediate flash of sensation, I feel that *Maria Golovin* was an aesthetic success—a qualified one, to be sure—and that its quick death at the Martin Beck could be explained only by someone who understands the Broadway box office. I do not.

Menotti called a variety of strange forces into play when he announced his opera as a "musical drama," mounted it in a Broadway theatre, and invited the drama critics, rather than their musical colleagues, to write about it. I understand the first part of this arrangement: the word "opera" is apparently box-office poison on Broadway. Mounting the work in a legitimate theatre, I can also understand (there was probably no practical alternative), although I do not feel that such auditoriums possess the acoustical qualities for musical presentation, or the non-prosaic atmosphere suited to so poetic a medium as opera.

But the reason for inviting only the drama critics, I cannot understand. As a musician I was certainly not offended, but a question of aesthetic categories remains. When a composer asks for drama criticism, rather than music criticism, he infers either that his piece is in a new genre, or that the dramatic element in it is more important than the musical. Neither of these things was true of *Maria Golovin*; it was, plainly and simply, an opera. Indeed, as sometimes happens with this medium, the most interesting events were often taking place, not on stage at all, but in the orchestra pit. I have wondered, since the closing, whether this breach of critical routine may not have confused the opera-going audience while failing to woo a theatrical one.

THE story of *Maria Golovin*, like those of most of Menotti operas, deals with the fates of wounded or trapped human creatures. The leading figure is a young man, Donato, who has been blinded in war. Formerly an aspiring architect, he is reduced to making spindly little bird cages, with which one side of the living room is piled. The scenery, by Rouben Ter-Arutunian, repeats this motif. Both the interior and exterior sets have a spidery, cage-like quality which I found forced and somewhat arty, but which most viewers seemed to admire.

Donato is getting along at home with his mother, when a beautiful, older woman comes along to rent an upstairs apartment. She, Maria Golovin, is married to a man who has been a prisoner of war for several years. She and Donato become lovers; the husband returns; a crisis is precipitated. In the final scene, a revolver which has been provided by an otherwise extraneous character, is brought into play. Donato asks his mother to help him aim it at Maria. Holding his arm, she points the gun to one side; tells him to fire; hands him a rose to drop upon the imaginary corpse; and leads him, seemingly stunned into helplessness or idiocy, from the room. Now he is free, she says.

As you can see, there was much melodrama in these proceedings, and a dependence upon the sensational qualities of any given scene. Such things are to be expected in a Menotti libretto. What was more interesting, however, was the philosophical content the author injected into his story and then failed to clarify. There was dreadful irony in the idea that, by causing Donato to believe himself a murderer, his mother was leading him into freedom. Was that not, rather, an ultimate enchainment? But the opera had ended, and none of the preceding material had really clarified what the author meant to say on the subject. For the first time, when hearing a Menotti opera, it occurred to me that what he needed was a good librettist.

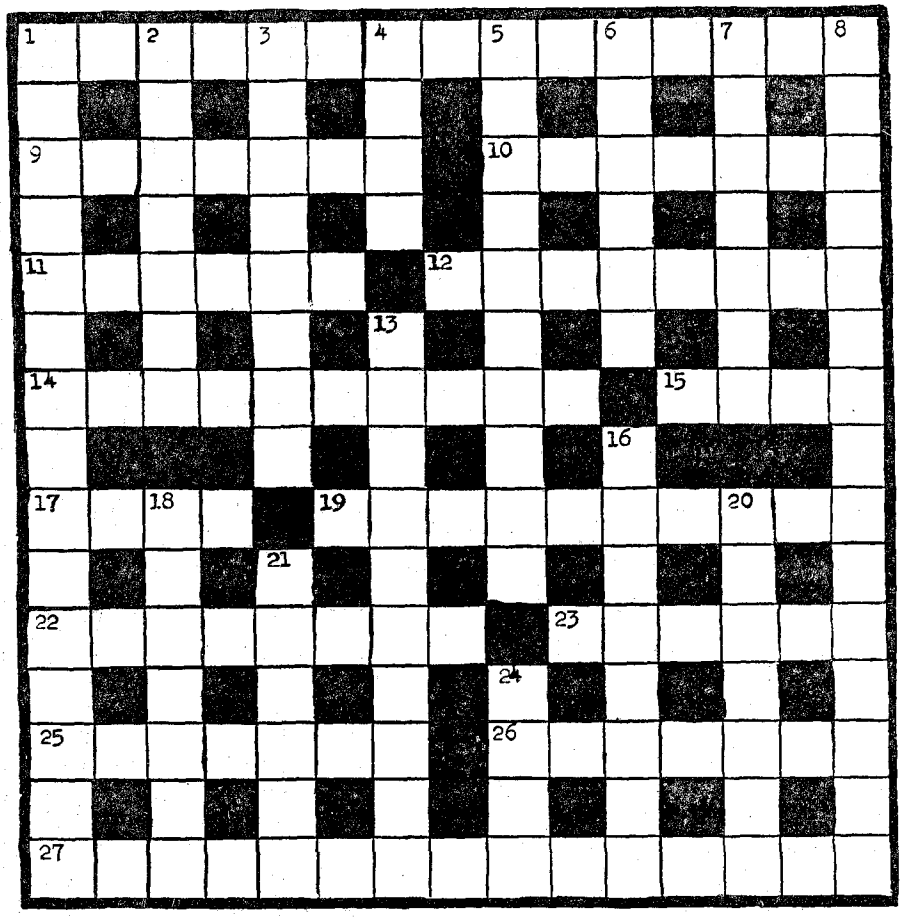
That feeling was enforced by the superior quality of the music which drifted up from the pit. Much of it had a freshness, and up-to-date sound, which was a distinct advance over the rather pale and stylistically equivocal idioms Menotti has employed in the past. It showed, at times, real urgency and conviction, which made the bumps in its progress both noticeable and less than basically annoying. I suspect that the score to *Maria Golovin* was put together in a hurry (as are most Menotti scores); perhaps an unusual hurry. Certain orchestral passages sounded as if they had simply been lumped together to follow the voice part and keep sound coming up from the pit. And, yet, bumps and all, the music had vitality. It could be smoothed and developed into an impressive score. Some of the aria material on stage, too, had a plainness and firmness which might ultimately wear better than some prettier tunes from the author's earlier operas.

My full impression, then, was that Menotti had taken so large a step forward that now it might serve him well to slow down his working pace, polish his scores more minutely, and call in a playwright to help detail, deepen, and keep in line the psychological and philosophical meanings of his stories. Certainly, he has never given a better sign of being potentially the great opera composer so many people feel he is already.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Crossword Puzzle No. 795

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 See 13 down
9 Why Japanese go to wineshops, and leave. (7)
10 Seems to suggest what's at the bottom of modern dress for the brave wise man. (7)
11 Box-wood for 10? (6)
12 Put off about last, as a protective device. (8)
14 Always why, in trouble, it gets old before universal distribution. (10)
15 No snake-in-the-grass in the simple scene of song. (4)
17 Nursery bell-carriers. (4)
19 The year of the Indian Moon? (4,6)
22 A cut is no substitute, where knockdowns are concerned. (8)
23 Somewhat like Dorothy's lion. (6)
25 Looks like the devil, regarding application. (7)
26 Take me back to the tavern, and move for prohibition! (7)
27 Kind of literary passage of an early American painter? (It's not a major point! (9,2,4)

DOWN:

1 The distinction of "I" into "A"? (15)
2 Shorten what Pons Asinorum is for fools. (7)
3 Servers suggesting Carroll's bats? (3,5)
4 Cyclops was one. (4)
5 Toy store, or plant. (10)
6 Search for what might fall under foot. (6)
7 He might be pushing eighty, but is probably much younger! (7)
8 A sort of bastion proves to be a point of vantage. (11,4)
13 and 1 across Quando—age? (4,2,4,2, 2,3,6,2)
16 How the ghoul shows are sometimes represented? (8)
18 Get a bad case through one who beats it. (7)
20 How rhymers write? Wrong! (7)
21 The drink of a fakir schooled in learning. (6)
24 Give expression to what 18 might use. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 794

ACROSS: 1 Cassava; 5 Angelic; 9 Ailment; 10 Shakier; 11, 12, and 26 Grand Canyon; 13 Allow; 14 Ratable; 16 Cutaway; 18 Gyrates; 21 and 27 down Conning tower; 24 Apsis; 27 Tiger; 28 Tolstoi; 29 Unweave; 30 Descant; 31 Surfeit. DOWN: 1 Charger; 2 Saltant; 3 Amend; 4 Article; 5 Arsenic; 6 Ghana; 7 Laid low; 8 Caraway; 15 and 17 Button; 18 Granted; 19 Resoles; 20 Concurs; 22 Ingrate; 23 Garment; 25 Sitka.

MEETINGS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

to Study and Discuss United Socialist Action on Electoral Activity, Advancing Labor's Independent Political Action, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Peace.

NOVEMBER 28-30, 1958

Cleveland Ohio — Tudor Arms Hotel

Sponsors include: James Aronson, Rev. William T. Baird, Elmer A. Benson, Warren K. Billings, Reuben Borough, Richard DeHaan, Elinor Ferry, Dr. Jay Friedman, Leo Gallagher, Stephen Grattan, Martin Hall, Vincent Hallinan, George Hitchcock, Rev. Joseph P. King, Dr. A. J. Lewis, John T. McManus, Hugh Mulzac, Harvey O'Connor, George Olshausen, Sam Pollock, Dr. Holland Roberts, Annette T. Rubinstein, George Stryker, Richard B. Tussey, William Appleman Williams.

All individuals and groups are invited to participate.

Registration fee is $2.00. Contributions to assist with Conference expense are welcome. Make all checks and money orders payable to NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Registrations, requests for information, contributions should be sent to Eric J. Reinthaler, Conference Secretary, 177 East 316th Street, Willowick, Ohio.

PUBLICATIONS

FOR XMAS

give yourself or that "egg-head" friend, a really different challenge!

THE NATION'S BEST PUZZLES

58 Selected Crosswords

Mailed to you—or to him—if you send $1.25 to:

FRANK W. LEWIS
702 Devonshire Rd., Takoma Park 12, Md.

SOVIET EDUCATION
What does it offer to Americans?

1957-8 EYEWITNESS REPORT
SCOTT NEARING'S New Illus. Pamphlet

3 for $1. - 10 for $3.50 - 50c each

AMERICAN RUSSIAN INSTITUTE
90 McAllister St., San Francisco 2, Calif.

Half price to NATION readers!

INDEX TO TITLES AND CONTRIBUTORS

Vols. 1-105 (1865-1917)

of THE NATION

in 2 vols. — $12.50
(List price $25.00)

INVALUABLE FOR SCHOLARS AND LIBRARIANS!

This offer expires Dec. 31, 1958

Published and sold by

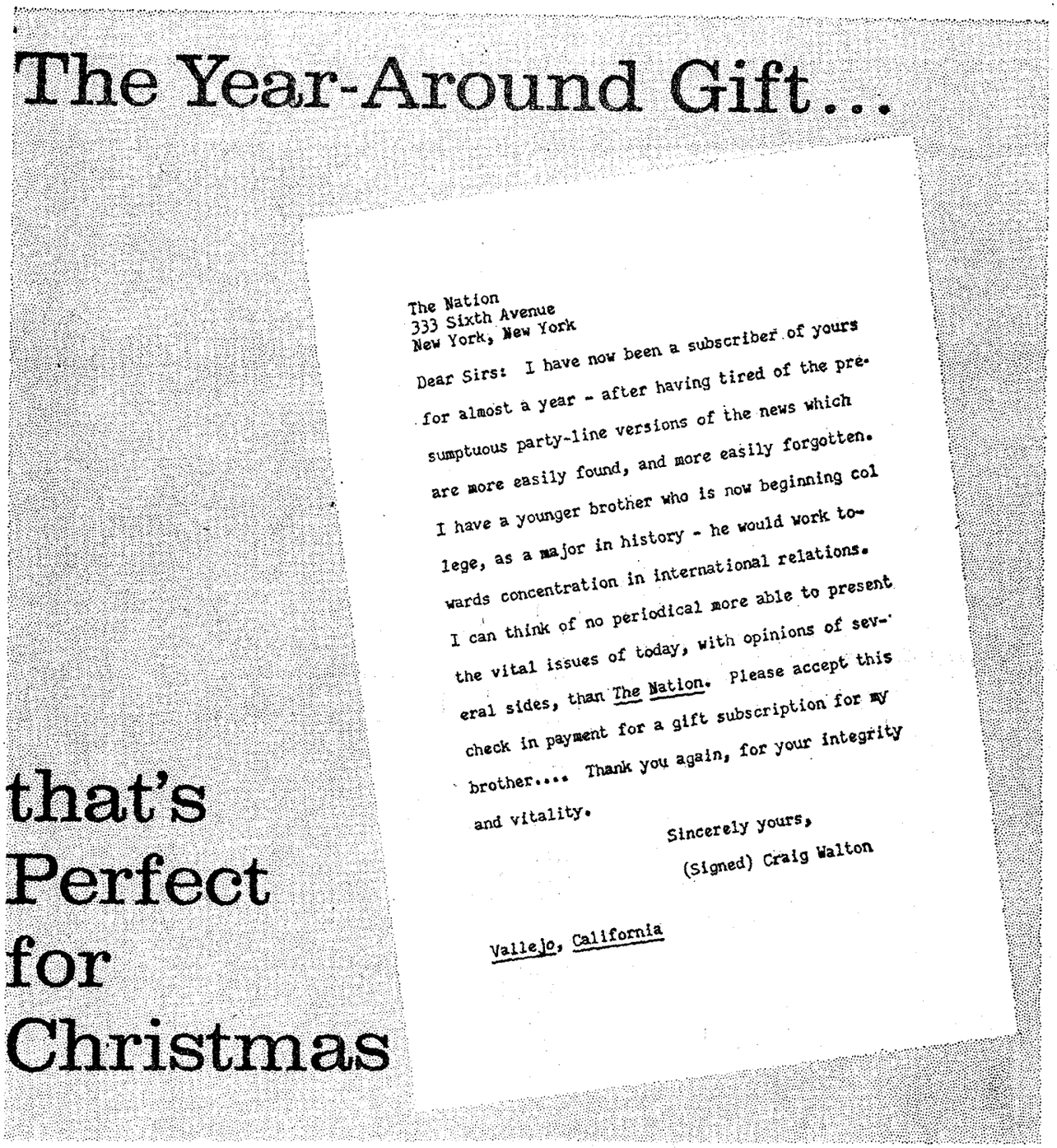
The New York Public Library
Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street
New York 18, New York

Write for a free list of New York Public Library publications in the arts, literature, and bibliography.

Printed in the U. S. A. by RCR Publication Printers Corp., N. Y. C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Year-Around Gift...



The Nation
333 Sixth Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Sirs: I have now been a subscriber of yours for almost a year - after having tired of the pre-sumptuous party-line versions of the news which are more easily found, and more easily forgotten. I have a younger brother who is now beginning col-lege, as a major in history - he would work to-wards concentration in international relations. I can think of no periodical more able to present the vital issues of today, with opinions of sev-eral sides, than The Nation. Please accept this check in payment for a gift subscription for my brother.... Thank you again, for your integrity and vitality.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Craig Walton

Vallejo, California

that's Perfect for Christmas

Christmas Gift Order Form **THE NATION, 333 Sixth Ave., New York 14, N. Y.**

Please send The Nation *as a Gift for one year at the Christmas Rate of $8.00 for the first Gift subscription and $6.00 for each additional Gift to the following friends:*

SEND SUBSCRIPTION TO .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY ..... Zone..... State.....
Sign Gift Card from .....

SEND SUBSCRIPTION TO .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY ..... Zone..... State.....
Sign Gift Card from .....

SEND SUBSCRIPTION TO .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY ..... Zone..... State.....
Sign Gift Card from .....

MY NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY ..... Zone..... State.....

☐ I enclose payment of $..... ☐ Bill me

11-22-52

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED